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A NOVEL.

EDITED BY THE AUTHOR OF "GRANBY."



Brussels:

AD. WAHLEN, PRINTER TO THE COURT,

GRANDE RUE DE L'ÉCUYER, N^o 49.

—
1835.

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ADVERTISEMENT

BY THE EDITOR.

APPEARING as “ Editor ” I will briefly explain what that word is, and is not, here intended to imply. It does *not* imply that I originally suggested, or have participated, in the composition of the following novel. It implies nothing that can detract from whatever credit is due to the writer for originality in design or success in execution. It implies only my cordial approbation of these volumes—that I incur with pleasure the pains and penalties of literary sponsorship, and that, while the writer is pleased to remain unknown, I am glad to perform the office of introduction under a name which has already claimed the indulgence of the public several times.

I am permitted to state that this is a first publication, and that it is the work of a female hand. Neither of these circumstances do I mention with a view to deprecate criticism. I mention them rather as claims upon the attention and interest of the reader; for from a mind of which the stores are yet undivulged, originality may most reasonably be expected; and female novelists have been so frequently successful, that the fact that these pictures of modern life have proceeded solely from a female hand may be justly regarded as a re-

commendation. By many, perhaps, the latter announcement will be deemed superfluous; and the feminine tone and character of the work may produce in the reader that same conviction which we should entertain after the perusal of many of the writings of Mrs. Inchbald, and Mrs Opie, and all the novels of Miss Austen—namely, that they could not have been written by a man. To comment upon this work is not my purpose; and I now resign it with confidence to the judgment of those who can appreciate delicacy and fidelity in the delineation of character, and in the analysis of feeling.

Sept. 15th, 1854.

ANNE GREY.

CHAPTER I.

MR. and MRS. GREY were good sort of people. Mr. Grey was a middle aged man, neither tall nor short; sensible, though not clever, and in all respects as little remarkable as others of the numerous class of good sort of men, who are allowed to know quite as much and a little more than their neighbours.

He married a woman in every way inferior to himself. She was less well born, less well bred, a good deal less sensible, and decidedly a great deal more of a good sort of person. Mr. Grey might, or might not be aware of her inferiority; if he was, the world knew nothing of it, for he seemed perfectly contented, and never fidgetted out of the room when his wife's vulgar relations came to see him, or coloured up with a virtuous sense of mortified superiority when Mrs. Grey appeared rather *unsuperior* in the presence of his own better connexions.

It was evident that Mr. and Mrs. Grey went on well together;—not exactly as a cat and a dog will do, who have been taught by the habits of companionship the one to beware of sharp claws, the other of the snap of her canine friend's sharp teeth; but really with-

out any consciousness that they were not meant for each others' society. Mr. Grey looked on his wife as "Mrs. Grey," and Mrs. Grey looked on her husband as "Mr. Grey," and that Mr. and Mrs. Grey should not be the two people in the world best suited to one another never seemed to enter the minds of either of them.

Of Mrs. Grey, as she is not my heroine, I need not say that she was above or below the middle height, that she had dark expressive eyes, or bright blue sparkling ones. She is not my heroine—but, as the mother of my heroine, she must be described. Not the tall, austere, romantically cruel mother. Alas! Mrs. Grey was not this! What is to be done, then, for a description? Mrs. Grey was only a good sort of woman. She was kind-hearted—well-intentioned—but had no superfluity of feeling. She had no sentiment—never wept at imaginary ills—loved her husband, as I said, because he was "Mr. Grey," and she was "Mrs. Grey"—loved her children because they were Mr. and Mrs. Grey's children, and were Masters and Misses Grey—cried when her first child cut his first tooth in safety, and ever after shed a few tears on all other proper occasions of the same kind. She was not a literary woman; but she was well read in the *Whole Duty of Man*, *Family Lectures*, and *Doddridge's Family Expositor*; got through *Boswell's Life of Johnson* once in every year; *Sir Charles Grandison*, *Cecilia*, and the *Vicar of Wakefield* in the course of two, and shed the same number of tears over each as were shed on all other proper occasions in the family, such as tooth-cutting, etc.

She made a point of reading a paper of the *Spectator* aloud every day to her girls as they sat at their work; and as it was all the *Spectator*, and the *Spectator* was written by a very good man (she never could understand that it was not all written by the same person), nothing would have made her believe that every paper was not likely to be beneficial to her girls from the ages of ten to sixteen; so, much to the edification of her daughters, the *Spectator* took its round, and regularly each day did Mrs. Grey open at the place where her next paper mark was left, and as regularly did she read through the various delinquencies of its various dramatis personæ, and duly move the mark to the end of the paper, fully impressed with the idea of the good which her daughters must have gained from listening to it.

Mr. and Mrs. Grey's family consisted of two sons, and two daughters. The eldest son William was a bit of a despot. It was lucky that he possessed a good disposition, for he was his mother's darling, and his will and pleasure guided every other person's in the house, not excepting Mr. Grey's. Perhaps the latter would scarcely have owned it : but where is the good quiet man who will not give up a little of his own authority to ensure peace in a house? Henry, the second son, and the youngest of the family, was a good-hearted, spirited boy, who loved mother, father, brother, and sisters, and sometimes plagued all of them, excepting his father and brother; the one, because he respected as well as loved him too sincerely, the other, because, though he loved him less, he saw that William resented too seriously any infringement of his will; and Henry, like his father, loved peace in a house.

Sophy, the eldest girl, was pretty and lively; just tall enough to be called tall by short people, and of a moderate height by tall ones; just accomplished enough to give her a name for accomplishments amongst those who had not any themselves, and sufficiently so to keep her place with their more decided possessors : good-tempered, good-hearted, and altogether a very nice girl, just beyond the line of common-place stupid misses; inheriting a large share of Mrs. Grey's youthful beauty, and thinking a very little better of herself than she deserved.

Ah, well! It is all the better when it can be so! It saves many sinking hearts, and blushing faces, and tears at home; and keeps up wonderfully the stock of family spirits; for how much more conversible and agreeable will the girl be who comes out of society with a comfortable impression of herself! She will love her sisters, think with twice as much respect and affection of her parents, and be very good-natured to younger brothers; and even so was Sophy Grey!

Anne, the second girl, was a year and two months younger than Sophy. If Anne was pretty she did know it. If Anne was clever she did not know it. If Anne was the sweetest tempered of all human beings she did not know it. She was little Anne Grey whom every one loved in and out of her own family, when they had time for it.

Meanwhile Anne was a kind of family drudge. William vented

his tyranny and ill-humour upon her, laughed when he made her blush, or cry, and said "what a queer little thing" Anne was; though he loved her, after all, and allowed, not unfrequently, that she was the best of the set, and the best tempered little simpleton he ever knew. Henry made her his play-fellow, and the butt of all his good practical jokes, but he loved her with all his heart, and could never be happy in holiday times but when Anne could be with him, and hear of his school exploits; and always said, as he covered her little delicate face with kisses, after every boisterous joke that had annoyed or frightened her, that he really believed there was not another such a darling, good-natured girl in England, and he declared, that they might talk of Sophy being a beauty, and 'all that;' "but never mind Anne, you will marry a Lord or a Duke some of these days, or some fine fellow when he sees how well you can put up with his playing you tricks."

As Anne grew up and came out, Harry's practical jokes diminished, though not his love for Anne, who, he declared, really looked very pretty at times. To be sure it was a monstrous bore that she should be going out, and dressing smart, instead of romping with him; but the time would come when he should go out with Anne too, and take care that those tall black-looking Miss Dashwoods did not frighten her, or old Mrs. Morton make her sing when she was not inclined.

Mrs. Grey thought of Anne as a good quiet child who never grew up into a woman. She thought her very shy, and very useful to go on messages for William, or ring the bell for the whole family, whenever it was required to be rung for the service of one or all of them. Mr. Grey loved Anne whenever he could think much of her, and always gave her a pat on the back or a kiss when it came in the way to do so, and called her his good little Anne. Sophy was fond of her and entrusted her secrets to her, but never could hear any in return; and Anne would never have thought of trying to force any upon her. Sophy thought of herself as "Miss Grey," and of Anne as her good little sister who might get on very well as belonging to her.

And now will this do for a heroine? Anne Grey, how would you have blushed, how would you have looked at Sophy, had you been told that you, and not Sophy, were to be my heroine? Putting

Sophy out of the question, that *you* on any grounds were to be a heroine! and yet, Anne Grey, so it is; for mine is a quiet, commonplace heroine; and perhaps your gentle voice, your soft blue eyes, and your slight gliding figure;—but Heaven defend us from voices, eyes, and gliding gracefulness! we will speak no more of it:—but let us listen to Lady Downton.

CHAPTER II.

“WELL, Sophy, my dear love, I am quite charmed to see you. Ah! Anne too—I am so glad to see you both! but I really am tired to death. I have had such a day! My sweet Sophy, pity me! First in came, just when I had settled to my work, in came Mr Thorpe. Oh! that man. He is a great bore. I always thought he was—but you know he is so kind! and though I really felt so ill, and Dr. Bray”—in a lower voice “actually told me there would be danger in my over-exerting myself”—(Anne Grey looked very sorry. Sophy forgot to do so) “Yet I could not help—and do you know,” in an animated tone, quite forgetting the danger of over-exertion which had seemed so imminent—“he told me such a piece of news! what do you think? we are going at last to have Chatterton taken. A family have been to look at it—have actually spoken to Turner about it, and Mr. Thorpe saw a letter from Mr. Aston’s daughters’ greatest friend saying—I forget exactly, but it was something about places being taken after remaining long untenanted, just after an allusion to the Astons, and this coming with the account of Turner being applied to—It really will be charming! They do not know who the people are.”

“I shall be very glad,” said Sophy, if we have some neighbours there; but I do not think I will let myself believe any one is coming till they are actually settled there.”

“Ah! very true, my dear—you are a sweet girl; but I am so fatigued!” the invalid voice was come again. “Could you have

believed it? the slight exertion of seeing you has quite overcome me!"

"I am very sorry," said Anne. "Perhaps Sophy, as mamma intended meeting us on our way back—and I am afraid we are tiring Lady Dowton——"

"Ah, my dear, you are so kind!—but I feel better now, and I assure you it does me good to have you here. I envy you your health—but Sophy, have not you any thing to tell me?—No amusement for your poor sick friend?" in a very sickly smile. "I know Mr. Grey does not love gossip, but I hate it so much that you need not be afraid of doing any harm by talking to me. I never repeat things—indeed I dislike the trouble; but cut out as I am from all pleasures, my life would be a melancholy thing but for the conversation of friends."

"I wish I had anything to tell you," said Sophy, with a smile that was not perhaps caused by pleasure.

Lady Dowton was what is called an excellent neighbour to the Greys; that is, she was near enough for a walk to bring them together. She liked to have the Miss Greys come to talk to her, professed great friendship for all the family, and, as in the case with all other good neighbours, never thought it necessary to do more than profess. She always called girls "sweet loves," and told them how charmingly they looked. She played at "invalid"—no one knew exactly why, except that as she was indolent, and her husband, a good John Bull sort of man, was always employed either in hunting, shooting, or farming, and as they had no family, poor Lady Dowton had nothing to amuse herself with but being always a little ill. Nothing else would have kept her alive. She must have died of ennui, if she had not been constantly saved, by Dr. Bray telling her she was on the point of death. When "invalid" and Dr. Bray failed, then came gossip—and between playing "invalid," and gossiping in good earnest, Lady Dowton was kept alive—we will not say as many years as Sir John wished—for it would be hard to tell what that period would have been. But Lady Dowton did live a great many years, and as Sir John hunted, shot, and farmed the same number, so did she continue to be a poor sick friend to the Greys, and an active scandal-monger all the days of those numerous years.

Lady Dowton loved to have some one to talk to, to hear how ill

Dr. Bray thought her. She was always tired to death with the first few minutes of seeing any one, and so ill that she could scarcely bear the effort of shaking hands, and always twice as weak and delicate, when any one talked without retailing scandal, or did not quite believe her own.

“ I am afraid I have very little by way of news to tell you,” said Sophy. “ The only news of any interest that I know is that Maria Pemberton is going to be married.”

“ No really! Is that true?” said Lady Dowton, actually half-raising herself from her languid position on the sofa. “ Who is it to? that ugly girl! It must have been a take-in! I am sure the man could not like her! But who is it, my sweet Sophy? I am dying to know.”

“ No other than Mr. Barton—Fred. Barton—and I really believe he is going to marry for love, and has been a long time attached to Maria; but there have not been the means till his aunt died, who has left him all her fortune; and Mrs. Fred. Barton is to be a rich woman.”

“ No, you don’t say so!”

“ I am very glad,” continued Sophy. “ I always liked her; she is so good-humoured, though she is very plain.”

“ Oh! as for that!”—Lady Dowton held up her hands. “ It is plainness to a degree—Well, I am very glad of it! And where do they mean to live? and what do they do with the mother? I did hear—but don’t repeat it—I may trust you, you know, my dear Sophy—I did hear,” speaking almost in a whisper, “ that poor Mrs. Pemberton’s temper is so bad that Maria vowed she could not, and would not, live with her any longer; and this proves it! And you know it is said that unhappy Mr. Pemberton’s death was owing to a violent quarrel he had with Mrs. Pemberton.”

Sophy actually laughed. “ Nay, my dear Lady Dowton, do not say that, for poor Mr. Pemberton had been dying of gout for the last five years, and never in all that time saw Mrs. Pemberton or his daughter without scolding them both into silence. I do not see how her temper could have had such an effect upon his nerves: and as for Maria, she doats upon her mother, whose only fault towards her is, if any, humouring her a little too much. So we will let Maria Pemberton marry Mr. Barton, without finding any

other reason for it than that they are attached to one another."

"Aye, my sweet Sophy! I love to see you so happy and cheerful—but my poor weak frame—I cannot always look on the bright side of things—I feel now quite overcome," sinking back with the fatigue of not being agreed with as to badness of Mrs. Pemberton's temper. Lady Dowton was sent back to the resource of being an invalid. Happy woman! to have two strings to her bow.

But a new thought struck her. Lady Dowton, though she had no other occupation in the world, did occupy herself meritoriously in one thing—in writing letters: and will it be believed, or rather will it not be believed, spite of her assurance that she hated gossip, that Lady Dowton's letters were full of gossip—some might say—of scandal! and written for no other purpose than to retail the newest bit of news with the finest possible gloss cast over it; so that if she told of a marriage, it was sure to be known at the same time that "there were some unpleasant circumstances about it—that the gentleman had been carrying on an affair elsewhere, but that a fierce Irishman of a brother had carried the point sword in hand"—but who would copy Lady Dowton's letter? Suffice it to say that it was near post time—Maria Pemberton was going to be well married, and she was a very ugly girl—Lady Dowton was so ill that she would not keep Sophy and Anne any longer, and she knew they must wish to be going to dear Mrs. Grey—so "good bye, Sophy! how charming you look! good bye, dear Anne," and the Miss Greys walked home.

That day, had the post been way-laid, there might have been seen in one of those many letters in a female hand, "Maria Pemberton is going to marry Fred. Barton; and it seems, from what has been said at various times, that there has been some little manoeuvre to bring it about; but you perhaps may not have heard the shocking reason for the poor girl accepting a man she never could love—which is the vile temper of her mother, who, I have heard, actually at times threatened to send her out of the house. I am writing confidentially, my dear Miss Lightfoot, and I would not for the world—" What farther Lady Dowton's letter contained is not known; but never mind!—we will walk home with the Miss Greys.

They were both thinking on rather different subjects. Anne

had been shocked by Lady Downton's manner of speaking of the Pembertons, whom she really liked. She also remembered Mr. Barton with pleasure, for he had once saved her at a ball from the honour of dancing with a satirical-looking man, whom some one introduced to her. She therefore did not like hearing them abused—But after all where were the people that Anne Grey would have liked to have heard abused?

Sophy meantime was wondering whether it was really true that Chatterton was going to be tenanted, and what kind of people the tenants would be. She had some little vision of an agreeable eldest son, who would look at Sophy Grey, and look and love, and decide that no one was half so charming in the whole neighbourhood. A pleasing sister he might have, who should call her 'dear Sophy,' and dress after her, and still be a very agreeable, and pretty girl, whom every one would like just a degree less than herself. The parents should be pleasant. What a charming vision did she conjure up! Ah! that reality should ever, with its frosty hand, blacken the brightness of day-dreams like this of eldest sons with ten thousand a year, and declarations of love, and trousseaux, and honeymoons!

"Do you think it is true about Chatterton, Anne?" said Sophy at last.

"Oh yes! I had forgotten. I dare say it is."

"I wonder whether papa will visit them," rejoined Sophy. "It will be so agreeable to have pleasant neighbours there. I should like to know whether it is true."

"We shall soon know, I dare say," said Anne; "but we have so many neighbours already, that I cannot care about any new ones."

"I must say I like new people," said Sophy. "I like to be seen. I do not prefer," added she laughing, "to blush unseen and waste all the beauties, Captain Herbert talks about, on the desert air."

"No—true, Sophy dear. I would not have your beauty left to bloom unseen. I do hope for your sake, that the house at Chatterton may be well filled with young and old—the gayest of the gay, if you wish it. There might be father and mother, one daughter perhaps, and one, two, three, or even four sons; and all to talk and laugh and dance with you and admire you just as much as Captain Herbert does."

“ There’s a good Anne ! You are really the best natured sister in the world, and there shall be one of the two, three, or four sons left to your care ! ”

“ Thank you, Sophy, ” said Anne, in that quietest of all tones which is used only when the subject spoken of has ceased to interest, and when voice and attention drop at once in placidity.

On reaching home they found that Mrs. Grey had been waiting for them, had really had on her bonnet, fidgetted about to wonder what they could be doing ; told Mr. Grey that tiresome Lady Downton always kept the girls half the morning ; had asked him to have his dinner an hour later, because she was sure all their morning would be lost ; and they had to go and see poor old Betty Wood ; and Mr. Grey had consented with a sort of grumble to a thing he hated, just to prevent Mrs. Grey from talking so much when he was more than head and shoulders deep in a new book.

Luckily for Mr. and Mrs. Grey’s temper the servant came in with two notes of invitation. Happy Mrs. Grey ! she then had something to do, and forgot her daughters.

“ My dear, here is an invitation from Hadley for a few days — ‘ Ever yours ’ sincerely, A. H. Hadley ’ — what a pretty hand she writes ! You will go, of course. I had been hoping that Lady Hadley would ask us. Very civil indeed ! And Sophy never looked so well, and she has just got her new dress from town. ”

“ I am glad of it, ” said Mr. Grey, “ we will certainly go. This leaving home for a night or two is a terrible affair ; but, however, for the sake of the children, one must make a little sacrifice. You take Anne, my dear — they ask her, do not they ? ”

“ Oh ! I don’t know. I never thought [of taking Anne — Yes — your daughters — that certainly is an “ s ” — — Well, we might take her ; but she is so shy ! ”

“ It is better that she should go out, and get rid of the shyness, ” said Mr. Grey. “ Anne is growing very pretty. ”

“ Yes, yes, ” rejoined Mrs. Grey, in a sort of bustling, cast-off manner, for Sophy was in her mind just then.

“ And Anne’s singing, when she is not too much frightened, is the prettiest thing I ever heard, ” said persevering Mr. Grey.

“ Well then, I will write, shall I, and say we accept their invitation, ” said Mrs. Grey.

“ Yes, certainly, my dear,” and Mr. Grey was deep in his book again, and perhaps giving one corner of his attention to the blissful idea that Mrs. Grey was occupied for the next quarter of an hour.

The invitation to Hadley was a great pleasure to Mrs. Grey, and she was in her heart more delighted than she quite liked saying, for it was not dignified for old Mrs. Grey to be in a wild, girl-like delight. It was also a satisfaction to Mr. Grey. Lord and Lady Hadley were agreeable people, and had an excellent house; but the pleasure of an invitation to Hadley was greatly enhanced by Lord and Lady Hadley being known to be rather exclusive. Mr. Grey had a little pride in being liked by persons who were so—perhaps it was a weakness—but still it was natural. He was a man of refined mind, and was not rich enough to go yearly to London—he could therefore only enjoy such society as a country neighbourhood afforded; and it was natural he should prefer such houses as gave him the opportunity of meeting with those whose manners and mind best accorded with his own.

Mr. Grey had no vulgar love of rank or fashion, but he knew that those in high station have it most in their power to collect around them all the gems of England’s sons and daughters, and fathers and mothers, and to select, as their guests, the clever, the agreeable, the well-informed of all classes. Mr. Grey therefore liked an invitation to Hadley; and if the company fell short of his expectations he could turn with enjoyment to the choice pictures—the extensive library—the beautiful gardens, and the rare exotics, which the union of wealth and taste had collected together.

“ No end of invitations, my dear,” said Mrs. Grey, as poor Mr. Grey, having just resumed the train of his reading, had forgotten Hadley. “ Here we are all asked to an archery at the Gilberts’—this day fortnight—that is long enough off! I think we had better go. I dare say every one will be there, and it will be pleasant for the girls.”

“ Certainly, my dear,” and Mr. Grey tried to think with pleasure of an archery, and to read again; but good Mrs. Grey would not be satisfied with “ Certainly, my dear.”

“ Well then, Mr. Grey, do attend a little. Shall we go or not? I am sure I don’t know whether we ought. It’s well if the horses are not laid up, and then there would be the expense of posters, and William has been so extravagant this year.”

“ Well, my dear,” said poor Mr. Grey, just as you like.

Mrs. Grey was determined, surely, that morning to be provoking. “ Just as I like! Mr. Grey! Why you know I am trying to think what is for the best, and I want your opinion. It is of very little use saying ‘ just what I like.’ I want to decide what I do like !”

“ Ah, very true,” said good, patient Mr. Grey. “ I think we may as well go, and you will write the note perhaps—and—I am rather busy now with this new book, so, my dear, if you have nothing very particular to say—”

Mrs. Grey walked off muttering something about “ always the way,” and “ very difficult to know what to do.” In short she was not in a very good humour. I used to be told at times, when a child, that I had got up on the wrong side. I do not know exactly to this day what the nurse meant, but I knew the result; and this must have been the case with Mrs. Grey.

This is a conjugal dialogue between two excellent people, who really loved one another. Does any one think it unnatural? and if it is not unnatural, will it deter any young lady from entering into the blissful state of matrimony? I hope not.

Sophy and Anne came in—(they had no idea of not marrying because they listened every now and then to such conjugal dialogues). They came just to relieve Mrs. Grey of her remaining bit of ill-humour.

“ Well, girls, here are two invitations. I had been waiting half an hour for you, and then these came, and I have had such a difficulty in deciding how to accept them, as you were so long in coming. What could have kept you? One is from Hadley.”

“ Hadley!” exclaimed Sophy—her eyes brightening.

“ Aye, I thought you would be pleased,” said Mrs. Grey, all her natural good humour come again,” and we have accepted it : and here is another to an archerey at the Gilberts’.”

“ Hadley and an archery!” said Sophia, jumping round with a joyful bound. “ How charming! Dear papa!” giving him a kiss on his forehead as he read, and the patient man smiled and actually looked pleased.

CHAPTER III.

Is it dignified in a heroine to be pleased when she is invited to a country house, and to an archery meeting?

Luckily, Anne Grey, dignified or not, you will not incur censure on that account! Anne tried to be glad because her sister was glad; but it was rather difficult not to be sorry. Society had little pleasure for her, she felt so shy. She lost the time for her home pursuits—for her music, her drawing—and above all, her reading; and she gained only a feeling of being the shyest girl in England, and of sitting in positive misery during several hours, in the fear that some one would be so mistaken as to think she might be agreeable, and try to talk to her.

It would not have been so bad had not she known that in such a case her mother would have looked reproachfully at her, to make her talk in return, or her father perhaps would have said afterwards, “Why did not you try to be less shy, my little Anne, and let us hear the sound of your voice? You should learn to think better of yourself, and remember we go into society for the sake of others as well as of ourselves.”—If it had not been for all this, which Anne felt to be very true, she would have relied on her own freezing monosyllables to have ensured her peace in society.

Anne, however, soon forgot her shyness sufficiently to feel happy in society. It would have been ungrateful had she not, and never was there a being less chargeable with the sin of ingratitude. She overflowed with gratefulness for the smallest favour, but modesty and timidity often forbade her from shewing the extent of it, whilst it dwelt unrestrained in her heart.

Had timidity not checked the excessive expression of obligation, good taste would have done so. Anne had the most thorough good taste that ever being was possessed of. It existed in every thing—I was going to say it shone forth—but that is not an applicable term.

—None of her attainments, none of her virtues, could be said to shine forth—her modesty forbid it. Still a perfect taste and elegance existed in every thing, whether in her singing, her drawing, her dancing, her dress, her choice of books, or her kindness and attention to others; all was in good taste.

No sooner had the notes been despatched, than a ring at the door-bell announced a visitor; no uncommon thing at the Greys', who were placed in what is called a good neighbourhood.

Whether a good neighbourhood may be called *a good* is doubtful. One of its principal charms consists in the certainty of uncertainty, as to whether, when you have settled to your morning occupation, you are to be disturbed in it for so many half hours: whether your drawing is to go peaceably through its number of bright effects, and improving washes; or to be brought suddenly to a sharp edge, or a scumble, by the entrance of a visitor—your bright idea sent away—your drawing dried up into a cylinder by the agreeableness of Mrs. or Miss—s; or your book thrown aside, and sent out of train—your work—your music—all at the mercy of any one who makes a part of the good neighbourhood, and who go through the most wearisome of all things, a morning visit, you know, with the same long sufferance as yourself, and have to appear, with yourself, quite charmed to find you at home.

Then those other days, when, the carriage ordered, the work, the book, the drawing, laid aside; the flower-garden, gay and tempting in the sun, deserted; card case in hand, best bonnet on, a frown in the heart, and a smile on the face, you sally forth to the enjoyment of so many miles of dusty road, to the sight of entrance halls, and to the sound of door bells—to the breathless hope for a 'not at home,' and the 'at home' which you hear: or if 'not at home,' and your hope is realised (happiness beyond compare!) to have had this sight of the outside of houses, this rumble along dusty roads, to assure your good neighbours that you have returned their bore, and mean to be civil, and are not offended!

Thus, then, the "good," in a good neighbourhood, does not mean the same thing as other goods. Mrs. Grey felt it so, as she exclaimed in the bitterness of her heart, "How provoking! I shall lose all my walk to-day!" and Mr. Grey felt it so, when, for the fourth time, he resigned his book with a sigh; then on second thoughts seized it,

and, as softly as gentlemen's boots would allow, crept at a side door out of the room. Just in time, Mr. Grey! The door opened, and Mrs. Dodson was announced.

It has been said that Mrs. Grey had some vulgar relations. Mrs. Dodson was Mrs. Grey's first cousin. She lived not far from Weston—had lost her husband about five years back—had gone through the proper stages of inconsolable affliction, and had entered with vast pleasure into the enjoyment of the good things which poor dear Mr. Dodson had left behind him.

Mr. Dodson had been in trade. He was consequently very rich, and a rosy, fat, bustling, snubnosed, little man—that is what one should say in a novel of a man who had made his money by trade, and who was to be the vulgar, laughable character of the book; but poor Mr. Dodson is dead—so he cannot be made more useful than by having left to his wife the means wherewith to be rich and vulgar, and one son to tread in the steps of his father.

Mrs. Dodson was not only fat, but vulgar. It was vulgarity not of person alone, though in that she was pre-eminent, but vulgarity of mind. She thought highly of herself—highly of her son—highly of her thousands a year—her house on which thousands had been expended—her garden—her hot-houses, pineries, conservatories,—all the many good things which money can give—but she thought still more highly of every man, woman, or child, to whose name was appended those pleasing little fascinating words, Lord, Lady, Viscount, Earl, Marquis or Duke. Highly she thought of every one whom she could mention as a “very fashionable person.” Great people were Mrs. Dodson's idols, to whom she bowed—not gracefully—*that* she could not do! her figure forbad! but she did bow most profoundly in her heart, and set a value on every one, exactly in proportion to the number of the Peerage or of the fashionables whom they could count amongst their acquaintances.

Mrs. Dodson was a good mother, and had been a good wife; and where kindness was really called for it was always bestowed. But she had at the same time a large fund of envy and ill-will towards those who rose superior to herself in rank, wealth, or fashion. She was pompous, and tried to depreciate others, in extolling herself.

Her only son ‘Bob,’ or ‘Mr. Robert Dodson,’ as he was called, was exactly the person to have been expected from such parents.

He was awkward in manners and appearance; free from any reproach of intellectuality or refinement; like his mother, not bad-hearted; but unlike her, he was troubled with *mauvaise honte* to a distressing degree when brought into the presence of those whom an innate sense of something wanting in himself told him were his superiors. He was not so vulgar in externals as his mother. His pomposity did not appear so much—we hardly know, in fact, whether it really existed; and in person, though he was awkward, he might have passed very well for a stupid, unremarkable young man. Such was the scion of the house of Dodson—and now will he be accepted as my hero? Mrs. Dodson means to make him such—and what must be done?

It was Mrs. Dodson's favourite plan to marry her son to one of his 'cousin Greys.' From children it had been a settled thing between Mrs. Dodson and Mrs. Grey that Bobby was to marry Sophy. So when Bobby gave Sophy a kiss, as they played on the floor together, or Sophy cried because cousin Bobby was going away, and took his new toy with him, Mrs. Dodson winked at Mrs. Grey, and Mrs. Grey winked at Mrs. Dodson, and they held up their hands and said 'how wonderful!'

As they grew up, Mrs. Dodson saw that her son was a little wanting in external elegance and in mental attainments; and the doubts, which had at times risen in her mind, whether Bob with his fortune might not have secured a Marquis's or an Earl's daughter for his wife, were sent to rest, by seeing Bob's blushes and hearing his feet shuffling on the carpet, as he sat enduring a morning visit. Still more were they set at rest by seeing the Greys growing up pretty and accomplished, and the whole family getting into the best society, and counting up more Peerage-Book acquaintances than could be thought of without envy as separated from Bob, but very pleasantly as united to him.

Mrs. Dodson, to do her justice, was really fond of the Greys. She had little jealousies, not a few with Mrs. Grey—but still she really liked her. Mr. Grey was naturally kind-hearted, and so long-suffering towards his wife's relations and their vulgarity, that Mrs. Dodson could always say to herself—'How very comfortable and sociable Mr. Grey is!' and as she respected him, so she liked him, for being superior and not shewing any airs of superiority.

Sophy and Anne she liked because they were pretty, good tempered girls whom she had known from the cradle upwards. Either of them she felt would do very well for Bob ; and her goodheartedness suggested what a great thing it would be for them to marry such a fortune.

On the Grey side of the question, Mrs. Grey had been so long accustomed to the Dodsons and their vulgarity, that she was not quite aware of its extent. Bob was very harmless, and *very rich*, and Mrs. Dodson always spoke ‘ so highly of him ! ’—a proof of his being a good son. Mr. Grey did not think much about him. He was, as may be seen, rather an indolent man, and allowed things to be in a great measure managed for him. He thought Bob Dodson was a good sort of youth, who might make a very good husband, and he felt that if one of his daughters could like him, it would be quite as well that she should marry him. So far Mr. Grey went—but Mrs. Grey and Mrs. Dodson had gone some way farther. They had *almost* settled the wedding dress, *quite* the house which Bob was to have (Bagley Hall was to remain in Mrs. Dodson’s care till her death), the number of carriages, and the name of the first child. All this time Sophy and Anne knew nothing of this plan against their peace, and all this time Mrs. Dodson and Mrs. Grey kept up a little enlivening spirit of jealousy, which made Mrs. Dodson talk vastly of her riches—her carriages—her hot-houses—her hundred other et ceteras,—and Mrs. Grey talk grandly of her titled friends—of Lord Albert *something* being so smitten with Sophy—of Lady *some other* saying that she hoped the Greys would consider her house as their home—and so on.

Now enter Mrs. Dodson! Mrs. Grey, who had been for the last few seconds getting up a smile and a company face, forgot both on seeing that the visitor was no one after all, but her cousin Mrs. Dodson; so she very heartily shook her by the hand, and told her how glad she was that she was Mrs. Dodson and not any other person—and then, Mrs. Dodson having duly kissed Sophy and Anne, and said— “ Well, I’m so glad to see you, for its an age since I saw you all ! ” and having taken breath after the exertion of walking into the room, she and Mrs. Grey were seated, and Mrs. Grey had begun to think how soon she could bring in the invitation to Hadley, and Mrs. Dodson, how soon she could speak of having out-bid the

Duke of —— for the costly table at ——; a piece of extravagance by the way that was rather weakening to Bob's funds, and nothing but the gratification of talking about it could quite silence the risings of conscience and accout books in Mrs. Dodson's mind.

Meanwhile, Sophy and Anne considered themselves at liberty to go or stay as they pleased, so Anne glided off to her harp in the next room, and Sophy went to look at her new dress from town, and to think whether Captain Herbert would be at the Archery that day fortnight, and whether he would admire her still more in her new dress. Anne's harp was a solace to her, but, unlike Sophy, she had to send Hadley and the Archery to oblivion to render her as happy as usual, though one little pleasant thought arose about Hadley—“I wonder whether we shall meet Mr. Temple there!” A wrong note, Anne Grey! and Anne knew it was, and for five minutes she thought no more about Hadley, or Mr. Temple, or any thing but overcoming a difficult passage in her music, and the next five minutes her whole soul was in one of the most beautiful and touching of —— airs, which was played with all that expression and feeling which is some reward for the gift of a whole soul—even such a soul as hers.

Who then is Mr. Temple, who could cause one wrong note, and be so easily forgotten when he had caused it? Mr. Temple was a young man whom Anne had met on her only visit to Hadley—on almost the first visit she had ever paid after she came out. Edward Temple was tall, rather handsome, and very gentlemanlike. To finish his character, as Mrs. Dodson might have finished it, he was “a prodigiously fine young man, very clever, very satirical, very fashionable, quite of the first fashion, gave himself great airs, and would scarcely speak to any but his own set—but then, if any man had a right to be fastidious, it was certainly Edward Temple, for he was such a remarkably genteel, clever young man—dressed so well—and had such an air—but very quiet—so quiet in his manner and dress,”—that is what Mrs. Dodson would have said.

Such as Edward Temple was, he had been staying at Hadley during Anne's first visit there, and Anne had liked him—for he had actually spoken to her, and in a way that did not render her more shy, but so as to remove her fears for the moment, and enable her to keep up a conversation of five minutes without any great suffer-

ing. She had never again dared to place herself within the possibility of speaking-distance; but he had once, as she could not but observe with surprise and gratitude, saved her from singing, at some little expense of manœuvre to himself, when her distress had been manifested on being called upon for such an exhibition.

This was very good-natured, and, joined to his agreeableness, which she could listen to without any painful effort of boldness when it was not addressed to herself, gave Anne a very favourable impression of him, and made her entertain a slight wish to hear him talk again—not to be talked to. No—Anne actually coloured up with intuitive bashfulness as she thought of it; and yet he was so thoroughly well-bred in his manner, and so gentle and quiet, especially to her, that, in spite of his cleverness—his turn for satire—and the way in which he laughed at some people, she really felt less afraid of him than of most others whom she met in society. So Anne thought with pleasure of listening to Mr. Temple at Hadley.

The day arrived—Sophy in high spirits—well-dressed, and knowing she was so—with a most becoming bonnet on, in which she was quite aware that she looked very pretty. Anne, just as well-dressed, and looking the picture of elegant quietude and simplicity, but not in the least aware of looking very pretty, or of any thing but the fluttering of her heart, as they drove through the lodge gates at Hadley, whirled along the level sweep of carriage-road, through the magnificent Park, and stopped at last at the door under the imposing row of columns, that all seemed turned into eyes to laugh at and abash poor Anne Grey.

Shall I describe the party there, or shall I leave Hadley and its inmates in a sort of vague indistinctness? One way of proceeding might have a grand, romantic, and bewildering effect. The other might subject me to receiving a pretty compliment on my truth of description—on this or that person being ‘so natural!’ Let nature then have her sway—Let the grand sublime be left to nobler minds, and let me once more and for ever be common-place and true—Let me descend to all but to the patterns of the curtains, or the number of cups of coffee drunk by my heroine and her companions. Just down to this, and no lower, let me descend in minuteness.

On getting into the room, and after having sat there about ten minutes, Anne found that Hadley was not so much a matter of palpi-

tions at the heart as she had expected. Lady Hadley and Miss Trevor were the only persons in the room on their arrival. Lady Hadley was between thirty and forty, tall, rather pretty, and very pleasing; possessed of rather a distinguished air,—just that kind of air which would render it impossible to mistake her for a milliner, milliner's apprentice, or lady's maid, wherever she might be seen. Amiable, sensible, and tolerably clever, she had nothing more remarkable about her, but that she was apt to take likings and form friendships, which were not doomed to decay after the first effervescence of feeling was over—which were neither brought to an abrupt conclusion, nor kept lingering on to a natural death; neither to the slow decline, nor the galloping consumption of friendly feeling. Lady Hadley's likings and friendships lasted as long as they were deserved, or were called for, or prized by the objects.

Lady Hadley may therefore safely be called a remarkable woman.

Miss Trevor, the other person in the room on their arrival, was a lively, active old maid,—a person who did every body's business for them, and what is singular, always did it well, and never neglected her own in consequence—the most useful of all people in a house—always ready to talk or to be talked to,—rather preferring the former—always happy, always busy, always ready to play country dances to the children, or quadrilles or waltzes for those of a larger growth. When every one was saying with a sigh ‘ Who will play for us ? ’ and all who could play trying to feel unselfish and good-natured, and answering, ‘ I will with great pleasure ! ’ — then stepped in Miss Trevor, and querist and answerer both went to the enjoyment of the gliding quadrille or the whirling waltz, and Miss Trevor was a ‘ dear good woman ’ all the evening after, and part of the next morning.

Miss Trevor was a happy woman ! She had neither beauty, talents, nor riches—She was a very ordinary person—but she was useful and she was good-natured; and her usefulness and her good-nature rendered her the happiest and the most generally liked of all the people of every one's acquaintance. Ye unaccomplished, ugly, pennyless damsels, who having answered ‘ No, ’ and been ‘ taken at your word, ’ have lost your last chance of married felicity, look at Miss Trevor and be comforted !

CHAPTER IV.

LADY HADLEY was pleased to have the Greys in her house. She had taken a liking to Mr. Grey, and to Anne. Sophy she thought of as of the hundred other pretty, and accomplished, and well-dressed Misses of social life. Mrs. Grey certainly was rather a bore; but Lady Hadley believed her a good kind of woman, who made an excellent housekeeper, and *mère de famille*. She did not wonder that *she* should prize Sophy more highly than Anne, for she felt it would be impossible that such a woman as Mrs. Grey could truly appreciate Anne's character; but she did wonder that all who had discernment and taste, who saw the modest grace of Anne, should not take as decided a liking to her as she had done herself.

When Anne went up to dress for dinner, it was with the conviction that it would be very pleasant at Hadley, and not so alarming as she had imagined. Lady Hadley was such a charming person, and so peculiarly kind in her manner, and old Miss Trevor was so chatty and good humoured, that it was very comfortable to have such a resource, for it was almost impossible to be frightened at Miss Trevor.

Sophy, too, was in good-humour: she had heard of a pleasant party expected that evening—some whom it would be worth while should admire her; and Sophy had a fondness for admiration, and was never in a better humour than when her vanity had been gratified. She let Anne have as much of their joint maid's attendance as she required, without saying a cross word, or feeling that she wanted her at the very moment that Anne did—dressed herself perfectly to her own satisfaction, and told Anne, when they were both ready, that she never saw her look so well in her life. Anne's little vanity just brought a *soupçon* of a blush on her cheek, and one of those pretty half smiles of hers,—and they descended to the drawing-room ripe for conquest.

There assembled were Lord Hadley, whom we must just mention as a well-informed, agreeable man, having a decided taste for hunting, and the reputation of being one of the ugliest men in England. Miss Trevor, who was always in good time, and had never been too late for breakfast, luncheon, or dinner, in her life. Mr. and Mrs. Cartwright,—both young and both devoted—not to each other—no, though they really appeared to go on exceedingly well together, and generally called one another ‘Arthur,’ and ‘Emily,’ and ‘my dear,’ *in society*; but that to which they were both devoted, was, the one to being thought pretty and agreeable by all the world, as well as Mr. Cartwright; the other to being thought agreeable and *dangerous* to the weaker and better half of the world, which Mrs. Cartwright was not unwilling to leave to his attention.

Then there was a good old prosy man—Sir Henry Poynton, a K. C. B., who had seen much active service, and was quite ready to talk about it whenever he could get any one to listen—always ready to laugh at a good joke, when he could understand it, or to puzzle at it till he did, and never grudged giving his laugh gratis five minutes after the call for it had ceased, and every one had become grave again.

Lady Marston, the Ladies Mary and Agnes Dalton, and Mr. Arthur Dalton, were variously distributed about the room, Lady Mary looking the amiable and pretty to attract the attention of another of the party, whom I have not yet named—no other than Lord Stoketon, one of the young men to whom mamas are very partial—in other words, a good ‘parti.’

Lord Stoketon was an ordinary kind of gentlemanlike, talkative, good-hearted young man, who was not in the least attending to Lady Mary and her prettiness, but looking in a sort of vacant happiness round the room, standing with his back to where the fire should have been. Lady Agnes Dalton was looking ugly and sensible in a conversation with Lord Hadley, who evidently considered her rather a bore, and felt the weight of her good sense more heavily than he wished. Mr. Arthur Dalton was whispering to Mrs. Cartwright, in a congenial arm-chair, sociably drawn close to hers.

Such were the people and their occupations when Mrs. Grey, Sophy, and Anne, entered the drawing-room at Hadley. Mr. Arthur Dalton’s glass was immediately attracted to his eye, and the end of

a whisper to Mrs. Cartwright curtailed by their entrance. One minute sufficed to satisfy him that he did not know them, and that Sophy was a pretty looking girl, and he was again whispering to Mrs. Cartwright, and she was again laughing affectedly, conscious she looked pretty when she did so.

Lord Stoketon's vacant stare was stopped, and his eyes were not again cast in vacancy towards the window, but rested for the remainder of the time till dinner on Sophy.

It was evident he had already settled her to be a very pretty girl. Sophy was quite aware of this, too, and wished to know who he was, but would not ask, not even Miss Trevor, who seated herself by her and told her why Lady Hadley was so late for dinner, and what it was they had been talking about to keep her from dressing. This was all very interesting, and it was strange that Sophy should be desirous of any other information; but she had not much time to care, for Lady Hadley came down, and she found herself introduced to Lord Stoketon, she scarcely knew why, but she thought it was because he had desired it, and then she was introduced to Mr. Cartwright, and the Ladies Dalton—Mrs. Cartwright spoke to her without being introduced—Mr. Arthur Dalton put up his glass at her again meantime—Lord Stoketon stood by looking impatient, and Sophy Grey was a happy Girl!

In a few minutes more she found herself at dinner, seated between Lord Stoketon and Lady Marston. That dinner decided Lord Stoketon in thinking Miss Grey one of the prettiest and most charming girls he had ever known. It decided Miss Grey in the same opinion, and also in a few extra ones, such as that, Lord Stoketon was very agreeable, and that the least becoming sort of coiffure was that of Lady Mary Dalton, who sat just opposite. Anne was happily placed between Sir Henry Poynton, and Mr. Arthur Dalton, the latter of whom gave her her greatest chance of happiness by never speaking to her, and the former talked incessantly without requiring much in return, and was so good-humoured, and so evidently delighted with having found a good listener, at last, after a thirty years' search, that Anne could not dislike his talking to her. So the dinner was a pleasant one both for her and for Sophy.

That evening passed as most other evenings pass in a country house, with a slight mixture of the dull and the agreeable. Mr.

Cartwright had found out that Anne was prettier than Miss Grey, and made various attempts to talk to her, which Anne as regularly repulsed by turning to her constant friend and proser, Sir Henry Poynton, who was quite elated by this tacit hint for a new anecdote, and always set off again at the rate of a quarter of an hour a story; so Anne had merely to smile, and she was safe from Mr. Cartwright. Mr. Cartwright could only look astonished, curl his lip, and be very particularly entertaining to Lady Mary Dalton.

That evening, after the goodnights had duly been uttered, and all the hands which were to be shaken had been shaken at the top of the stairs, Mrs. Grey and her daughters found themselves alone in the Miss Greys' apartment; and then Sophy said, "What a pleasant evening we have had!" and "Oh! I like Hadley of all things!" and then did Mrs. Grey kiss her with a greater warmth of affection than usual, for it was evident that Sophy had made a conquest and been admired. Mrs. Grey was such a worthy woman! and like all other worthy mothers she always loved her daughters best when they were most admired, and least required it.

She kissed Anne too, with very singular affection, so I have no doubt that Anne had also been admired; indeed Lady Hadley had praised her very warmly, and Mrs. Grey had overheard Mr. Cartwright say to Lord Stoketon, "what a pretty creature she is!" so Mrs. Grey gave Anne two kisses, instead of one, and Sophy had one more for Lord Stoketon's sake.

"My dear," said Mrs. Grey, to her husband when they were alone, "what do you think of it? It is quite certain he was very much struck."

"Not hurt, I hope, my dear," said Mr. Grey, whose mind was then balancing between a note from his steward concerning the purchase of some Scotch cattle, and a story that had been told of a boy being thrown from a donkey.

"Not hurt, I hope, my dear," said Mr. Grey, with a very compassionate tone.

"My dear Mr. Grey! what are you thinking about? why, I certainly hope, indeed, I suppose, Lord Stoketon is a little hurt; for you know when men are in love, it is not always quite agreeable to them."

"Lord Stoketon in love! why, who with? Has he an at-

tachment? ” Scotch cattle and stewards’ letters still operating.

“ Really, Mr. Grey,” said poor Mrs. Grey, “ I wish you would attend a little. What I want to ask you about is whether you do not think Lord Stoketon is in love with Sophy ; and I am sure it is a matter of great interest, and one I feel most deeply. ”

“ Oh ! now I understand,” said Mr. Grey at last, Sophy and Lord Stoketon making a head against Scots, steward, boy and donkey.

“ Now I understand,” said he laughing, “ at least, as much as I can at present ; but as to Lord Stoketon being in love with Sophy, that is what I cannot pretend to say. He admired her, as most men do ; I saw that ;—but he had no other person very attractive to talk to ; so, my dear, we will not think of him for a son-in-law just yet. ”

Mrs. Grey said no more. It was not the first premature scheme she had formed.

And now let heroines and their mothers fall asleep, for they will require it, if they knew how much they had to go through before my book is finished. I have brought both my heroines out on the stage of my book. I feel nervous about going on. I have got them both into a large country house, and I don’t know how they are to make a graceful exit. Sophy might make a bold step and walk off, backwards, sideways, or straight forwards ; but Anne must be gently led ; she must get away quietly, yet not in silence. We must not let it be asked what did she come on for ? which, if she says not a word, meets with no hero, and with no adventure, will certainly be asked. As heroine, she must not play Dumby, yet it must not be felt, ‘ what a noise Anne Grey is making ! ’

What is to be done then ? Whilst they sleep, I will muse. I will set my brain on the rack, and visions of grandeur shall flit past me in the solemn hours of night, and the burnings of intense thought shall eat up my soul ; and I will—I will—I will do great things—I will call the Miss Greys in the morning !

Poor Miss Greys—poor Mr. and Mrs. Grey—poor Lord and Lady Hadley—all ye poor mortals assembled at Hadley—the hour is at length come. You must leave the comfort of your bed—you must get up, look ugly, and feel cross—be cold, though it is only the first week in September—be ashamed to ask for a fire, though you feel September frost worthy of December, stealing to your fingers’ ends. You must forget all your pleasant dreams—you must remember

all the ills that befell you the day before—you must all get up.

Sophy woke from the dream of Lord Stoketon and Captain Herbert. You will never decide the question. Anne woke from that fascinating vision of a K.C.B., from those words still drumming in her ear, “It was a very singular event. Another moment, and the tiger would have had me in his mouth. His tail was thrown round me, and I heard”—Anne’s agony for the safety of her K.C.B. had become extreme. She made a movement of eager anxiety to listen for the next words, and in a loud and startling tone she heard, “It is rather more than half past nine, ma’am,” and Anne and Sophy were both awake.

CHAPTER V.

“It is rather more than half past nine, ma’am,” and Anne and Sophy were both awake.

We find nearly all the party assembled at breakfast—Miss Trevor was presiding over the tea, an occupation for which she had a particular penchant. Lord Stoketon was ready to say good morning to Miss Grey—to make a slight attempt at shaking hands, without feeling certain whether the degree of acquaintanceship warranted it, and to be rewarded for the effort by Miss Grey’s extended hand, and a bright smile with her ‘good morning.’

Sophy had the art of always looking happy, and rosy, and bright in the morning, a superior attainment! but if the result of a free conscience, why is it not more common?

Great are the delights of a breakfast table! Great the charm of conversation amidst the fragrance of coffee, the fumes of tea, and the demolition of buttered rolls. Many a bright idea comes into the brain with a new pile of toast, or is rolled out with a fresh pat of butter. Many a *bon mot* brought to light with the first development of a new-laid egg, and many a scientific mystery unfathomed with the sight of the farthest depth of egg shell. Breakfast perhaps

is rather the time for wise and philosophical discussion than for the light and lively tone of dinner talk. People come down with a stock of goodness about them, which disposes them to be sensible. The goodness wears off during the day—very early indeed in most people, and by dinner time, though they are not really more cheerful, they are much more witty—much more satirical—much more sparkling, and well dressed.

But, you would know what was said so very indicative of amiability and wisdom at the breakfast table at Hadley? Nothing after all, very particular! Miss Trevor talked very good naturedly to Lady Marston, during the intervals of pouring out tea, and Lady Marston was the very dullest woman in the world. Sir Henry Poynton had manœuvred to sit by Anne, but Anne escaped and was seated between Mrs. Cartwright and Lord Hadley; so Sir Henry talked across the table to her, and when his neighbours would not listen, reminded her of the little anecdote he told her yesterday evening. Mrs. Cartwright had Mr. Dalton on the other side of her, but when she could spare a few minutes from talking to him, she turned to Anne, to whom she had, as she said, taken ‘a vast fancy,’ (perhaps she had heard that Lady Hadley had done the same;) and she questioned and cross-questioned her on her likes and dislikes, her sentiments, her weaknesses, her amusements, and her occupations; then turned to Mr. Arthur Dalton, and whispered “what sweet simplicity!” and looked sweet *for* Anne, I suppose, and *at* him; then turned to Anne again, paid her a great many pretty compliments, and invited her to come to her room, and look at a most charming bonnet, a Swiss costume, which she was quite sure would suit her exactly. Anne thought her very absurd, very good-natured, but very tiresome.

Then Lady Agnes Dalton said something about the wonderful velocity of steam-carriages; and some one said something in answer, and some one said something more, and all these somethings led to a discussion which was general, and this discussion ended in another on first attachments, and the propriety of men leaving their eldest sons every thing, and their daughters nothing. How railways and steam-carriages led to this I will not pretend to say! but so it was! and very interesting discussions they were, and very much did every one regret the conclusion of the last drop of tea, and the last

scrap of toast, which had served as an excuse for lingering at the table.

Before the breakfast room was deserted, Lord Stoketon, who sat by Miss Grey, had found out that she lived within eight miles of Hadley, that she had two brothers, and that she never rode. He had told her that she ought to ride, for she would look very well on horseback, and that he had the quietest little horse in the world, that he could lend her. During the remainder of the day Sophy received a little more information from him; such as 'that he was struck with her appearance the moment she entered the room the preceding evening'—'that he thought her quite different from any other person he had ever seen' (I wonder why this should be a compliment!) and that 'he had been told by his sisters that he would never marry, but that he somehow thought he should!' What Sophy told him in return I do not know—but most likely she told him she was going to an Archery next week, and that she thought his sisters must be very fond of him, as he was an only brother.

However this may be, when the sisters were alone in their room that night, Sophy asked Anne what she thought of Lord Stoketon; and after about five minutes' abstraction, she began to talk of Captain Herbert, and said, for the first time that she thought he was rather a coxcomb, and, that she preferred people who had more bluntness of manner.

Her grave mood was soon over, and then the two sisters discussed the party at Hadley, and the events of the day, and laughed over all the variety of characters—Lady Agnes Dalton's sense, Lady Mary's attempt to appear pretty and interesting to Lord Stoketon, Sir Henry Poynton's prosing, dear old Miss Trevor's chit chat, and to praise and praise over and over again that very dear Lady Hadley; but Anne was more warm on that subject than Sophy. Sophy was quite ready to talk of the ridiculous, but she was soon tired when there was nothing to be bestowed but praise. They both joined most heartily in decrying Mr. and Mrs. Cartwright; and joined as heartily in laughing at Mr. Arthur Dalton, who was a conceited simpleton, affecting exclusiveness, and a mere hanger-on of those supposed to be of any consideration in the world.

The next day, when the letters came, Lady Hadley exclaimed with

great delight, as she tossed one to Lord Hadley, "I am so glad!" "Edward Temple comes to us to-day, and there is his note. Just like himself! He always has the power of making one laugh on or off paper, more than any person I know, without making one feel that it is foolish to do so: when I am with him, and he chooses to be entertaining, I am always convinced that nothing is so wise as laughing. Do not you think the same, lady Agnes?" said she appealing to her, but without much idea of being understood.

"Certainly, laughing may not be considered as a mark of intellectual weakness on all occasions," said Lady Agnes, looking grave and very sensible.

"Oh dear!" I hope there is no harm in it!" said Mrs Cartwright, who had once been told that she never looked so beautiful as when she laughed, addressing Lord Stoketon.

"I should not like at all not to be allowed to laugh," said his Lordship, "for I think it excellent fun. Miss Grey, you do not think it very shocking, I hope?" said he to Sophy.

"I hope it is not," said she, laughing as she spoke, to confirm the assertion, "for I must be a very shocking person if it is!"

"And so you all believe that I think it very foolish to laugh!" said Lady Hadley. "I wish some one of you would say some very good thing, that I might have the opportunity of proving the contrary. Lord Stoketon! do be good-natured! Do say something witty?"

"Don't ask me, Lady Hadley! I would do anything I could for you; but I never said a witty thing in my life, but once, when I made a pun. I never found it out till I heard them all laughing, and then I asked what it was about, and they told me it was my pun! But I never could hit on another!"

"Very well! that will do admirably," said Lady Hadley, really laughing.

"Miss Grey, shall we finish that game of chess?" said Lord Stoketon to Sophy, and off they went, and they did finish it, and Miss Grey beat lord Stoketon.

It was settled that morning that the Greys should stay at Hadley a whole week longer. Mrs. Grey hardly knew how to seem not too much delighted. She *could* have jumped for joy, if it would have been decorous! for only think! There was Hadley alone!—*that* was enough! To be able to say that they had been staying so long

at Hadley—still more that they had wished to go home very soon, but that the Hadleys would not hear of it, and had pressed their staying so vehemently that she and Mr. Grey at length gave way. Then, as if this were not sufficient happiness, there was Lord Stoke-ton! Even, if he had not been inclined to fall in love with Sophy, a whole week in her society with nothing else to do, would make it impossible for him to avoid it! but as it was, when Mrs. Grey saw him, as the Hadleys were pressing their stay, actually taking the part of master of the house, and, at the expense of good breeding, pressing too! *then* she felt that Sophy must be Lady Stoketon, and that all would be settled before the end of the week.

Then about Anne, too! Lady Hadley had not only asked them all to stay, but she had asked that Anne might remain still longer, or come some other time. Was there any thing so delightful! who could wonder at Mrs. Grey's happiness!

“Where is your brother, Miss Grey?” said Lord Hadley. “I sent a note of *invite* to him; but, I suppose like all other young men, he is little at home. To send a letter to a young man at home is, in fact, sending to the place where you are sure it will *not* find him.”

“William is—at this moment I cannot tell exactly where he is,” said Sophy, laughing.

“Ah! I knew you could not,” rejoined Lord Hadley, laughing too. “Do not attempt it. Your best way is always to ask from others, and you may happen to find out in this manner. Cartwright,” raising his voice to reach Mr. Cartwright at the other end of the long library; “did not you say you met William Grey somewhere? Here is Miss Grey wants to know where her brother is.”

Miss Grey laughed and said, “it was often very true that she could not tell where William was, and that she had sometimes learnt from strangers; but that, in this instance, she did know where-abouts he was; for he was in Yorkshire, if he was not at the Lakes, or gone into Scotland, or returned into Lancashire, or Cheshire; but a letter had not come very lately.”

“Bravo, Miss Grey! You guess that your brother is either not in England, or in one out of one, two, three—out of *five* counties. Cartwright, do help this unhappy sister to a little less grand and unbounded idea of where her brother is.”

“ All I can tell Miss Grey is that I met Mr. William Grey just three days ago in Cheshire at the Grahams, ” said Mr. Cartwright; “ and there he seemed fixed—very pretty girl, Jane Graham, Miss Grey! ”

“ I don’t know her, ” said Sophy.

Now what am I to do with all these people for the next two or three days? Mr. Grey was very happy with Lady Hadley, with whom he had a great deal of conversation, in the course of which they mutually discovered that they were both very superior people. Lady Hadley’s high opinion of Mr. Grey increased to a great degree; Mr. Grey’s opinion of Lady Hadley, as a pleasing, well-bred woman, was magnified into thinking her a remarkably amiable, sensible, right-minded person, with very good abilities and judgment, and the most engaging manners he ever knew.

Sophy was thoroughly occupied in receiving Lord Stoketon’s attentions, and Lord Stoketon in paying them. She had likewise a little extra work in keeping down Mr. Cartwright’s civility to the proper bounds of non-interference with Lord Stoketon. Mr. Cartwright thought Anne very pretty, and he wished that she should think him very charming; but it would not do. Anne! the shy, timid, Miss Anne Grey, snubbed him! so he saw that Sophy was being admired, and found out that she must be prettier than Anne. Lord Stoketon was in love with her; Miss Grey, therefore, was the person for his *petits soins*, and he gave them, and they were received very well, except when Lord Stoketon was in the way, and Mr. Cartwright would not get out of the way. Then Sophy lost her attention, and did not blush at his compliments, nor smile at his agreeable flatteries.

So all these people were very well occupied, and as for the remainder! they occupied themselves too. But Heaven defend me from relating the occupations of a Lady Marston, a Lady Mary, and a Lady Agnes Dalton, a Mrs. Cartwright, and a Mr. Arthur Dalton.

Reader, courteous, or uncourteous, *that* I leave to your bright fancy! and may it be light and airy as Mr. Arthur Dalton’s smallest small-talk! gay and unencumbered with the weight of sense, as Mrs. Cartwright’s sparkling laughter! sweet and sentimental as Lady Mary’s last smile at Lord Stoketon!

And now, ‘ see the conquering hero comes!’ “ Mr. Temple, my Lady, ” and Mr. Temple was ushered into the room.

“ Ah, Mr. Temple ! never was there such a welcome sound ! ” and ‘ how do you do’s ’ were resounding up and down the long library at Hadley, and Mr. Temple was come.

Anne, as he entered, wondered for a moment whether he would remember her, and she had just settled he did not, and had felt a little sorry ; but he turned towards the part of the room where she sat, looked for a moment, and then, as Anne raised her head, bowed and smiled ; and the smile came naturally, for he seemed pleased to see her there. However it went no farther, for he did not come near her, nor take any notice of her again before dinner.

CHAPTER VI.

AND now all the party at Hadley were dressed, and looked as beautiful as they could, and came down to dinner.

I flatter myself I am like Homer. I never miss an opportunity of bringing in man in his carnivorous capacity. I never forget that he eats and drinks, and I take great pleasure in recording that he does. I never miss bringing him to breakfast and to dinner.

Do not suppose that I am going to set down any of the good things said by Mr. Temple. It is always the safest way for a novelist when he introduces any character that he means to be very superior—who is to be very clever, or agreeable, or sensible, or witty, to say for him as little as possible ; but make it thoroughly understood that if you had thought fit to set down his conversation it would have been something quite beyond all praise. But do not pretend to talk for your first rate characters, unless you know you are a first rate character yourself. I can assure you it is not safe, unless you happen to be a Miss Austen, or a Miss Edgeworth, or a Mr. or a Miss any other first-rate novelist.

How is it likely that you, perhaps a quiet, stupid, prosy man or woman, can invent all the witty piquant things which your supremely agreeable talkers have to say ? Modestly relinquish the hope ; but

give the reader to understand that he, or she, does say all the things which are the gems of conversation — the diamonds of society!

I will not quote Edward Temple, but you must take it for granted that he said a great many clever things. He did not always talk much — sometimes scarcely at all; but all he said, was it grave or gay, much or little, was worth hearing — and he *never bored*!

Any one on seeing Edward Temple must have known that he would be agreeable, and a perfect gentleman. Women might not think him very captivating. Men might not think of calling him good-looking; but no man would have objected to look like him.

Mr. Temple did his part of the agreeable at dinner; he sat by Lady Agnes Dalton, and he talked very sensibly to her, and encouraged her to talk very sensibly to him, and never smiled the whole of the time. Every now and then he looked at lady Hadley to see if she were aware how very well Lady Agnes was talking; and sometimes he looked for the same purpose at Anne, who sat just opposite.

When he looked at either he had half a curl on his lip, which seemed like an approach to a smile, but which was not allowed to be a decided one; but there was an amused air about, it, and a lurking touch of satire!

I had rather have been Lady Hadley, or Anne Grey, than Lady Agnes at that time! but poor thing, she knew nothing about it, and ever after that eventful dinner, “Mr. Temple was a remarkably intellectual, sensible, person,” with her; “much more so than was universally known, or than might be supposed from his general character.” Mr. Temple, how much pleased you would have been had you heard it? Anne could scarcely help smiling when those quiet looks came across the table, and Edward Temple saw that she could not.

In the evening there was a good deal of talking, a little *Ecarté* playing, and there were some work-baskets in use; Miss Trevor's and Lady Marston's amongst the number; and Mrs Grey was learning a new kind of knitting to make poor old men uncomfortable; and watching in the intervals of “turn your worsted this way, and bring your pin that way,” the progress of the flirtation between Sophy and Lord Stoketon. Over went one knitting pin.

“A house in town,” thought Mrs. Grey.

“ Oh ! not on that side the pin, my dear Madam, ” screamed Miss Trevor.

“ Oh ! dear no, ” said Mrs. Grey. Then over came the first coloured worsted, and back went the second, and all was going on well.

“ A Brussels lace veil, certainly, ” cogitated Mrs. Grey.

“ There is a *little* mistake there, I fear, ” interposed Miss Trevor.

“ Oh, dear yes ! ” said Mrs. Grey.

Oh, Mrs. Grey ! how difficult a thing it was for Miss Trevor to teach you your knitting !

Anne found it a pleasant evening. She had a good deal of conversation with Lord Hadley, and she thought him more agreeable, and less of a mere fox-hunter, than she had expected. Lady Hadley had sometimes joined in the conversation, and Anne was always glad to be talked to by her ; she was so kind, and had such pleasing manners ! Sir Henry Poynton, of course, devoted some of his time to her ; but that which, as she thought over the evening, gave her the most decided impression of its having been pleasant, was a little conversation which she had with Mr. Temple.

He had come up purposely to speak to her, had sat down by her, and before she had time to be very much frightened at the idea of being spoken to by the clever and entertaining man of the party, had contrived to interest her so far, that she could think of nothing but being amused.

Music was spoken of by some of the party ; and Anne started a little and blushed, for she thought that her turn would come. But it was dropped again ; not however without Mr. Temple having remarked her blush and start.

“ Perhaps you do not know, ” said he, “ that you ought to be very much obliged to me. I see you feel at this moment that you have just had an escape from singing. ”

Anne smiled ! but said nothing.

“ Now you ought to be aware that I know you are too—what shall I say ?—too modest perhaps, to like singing before all of us. Is it not so ? ”

“ Yes it is, ” said Anne, looking pleased and amused.

“ Ah! You did not think I should find that out; but it does not require so very great a degree of discernment. ”

“ I fear not, ” said Anne. “ I am sure not only you, but any one, might discover it, who took the trouble to think about it. ”

“ Ah well! I did take the trouble you see! ”

Anne blushed, for she thought from what she had said, he might think her conceited.

“ Perhaps, ” he continued, “ you will not remember that the first time I had the pleasure of meeting you was in this house, and that you had actually been forced to sing, and were going most cruelly to be made to sing again. To be sure it was a very excusable cruelty, in any one who had heard you before. You are smiling. I am afraid you are taking that for a compliment, and you do not like the appearance of one. You are laughing at me for trying to express my sense of your musical merit. ”

“ No indeed, ” said Anne, “ that would be very ungrateful. ”

“ I am glad to hear you speak of gratitude, ” replied he, “ that is exactly the sentiment I am wishing to inspire. You look surprised, but you do not yet know that you ought to be eternally obliged to me—that you are indebted to me for your preservation—not from the danger of losing your life—but from a much greater one in your estimation—from the horror of singing a second song! ”

Anne laughed.

“ I exerted all my abilities to save you from such a fearful occurrence; and now Miss Grey, do not you feel very grateful—will you not say that you are very much obliged to me? ”

“ I suppose I ought to feel so, ” said Anne.

“ If you think *that*, I am satisfied, ” said he, “ and I have now of course the satisfaction of knowing that Miss Anne Grey is very much obliged to me. ”

Anne did not make any answer: she was getting shy, but she was very much pleased that Mr. Temple should have paid her a compliment. She thought it was one, though she would not be quite sure; but she would think about it when she was alone. Here the conversation ended, for Lady Hadley addressed Edward Temple; he got up to talk to her, and did not come near Anne again the remainder of the evening, but he was very amusing, and Anne sometimes was at liberty to listen to him.

So much for the first evening of Edward Temple's visit at Hadley. If any one wishes to know what he thought of Anne Grey, it was this, that she was a very pretty lady-like girl, quite unlike the generality of Misses whether in town or country—a person whose character was worth studying, whose dignified simplicity and modesty would have rendered it as difficult as it would be unpardonable to ridicule her, and in short, he thought of her as an interesting novelty.

Edward Temple had a turn for ridicule and satire, but he never exercised it (except under the strongest temptation of absurdity) but when it was deserved by affectation and self-importance. He had a high opinion of himself, but not unjustly. He had great abilities and he knew it; but he did not think them greater than they really were. He somewhat despised the world, at large, for he was quick at seeing its faults and follies: the world had done all it could to spoil him, for it flattered, admired, and fawned on him; but he was too keensighted to be spoiled.

Perhaps he might have been capable of strong attachments and of warm and steady feelings; but there were none to call them forth. His parents had died when he was young, and he had lost an only sister about six years ago.

The mutual affection between the brother and sister had been very strong, and her death had left him with few on whom to depend for affection, or who were capable of exciting it. Edward Temple then became a gay man of the world,—at least such he was considered, and such we will conclude him to be when he became acquainted with Anne Grey and ourselves.

I had forgotten to mention that he prided himself on a knowledge of character. The discovery of hidden virtues, or hidden foibles in every new acquaintance was one of his amusements; and if Edward Temple prided himself peculiarly on any thing, it was on his powers of discrimination—on his successful voyages of discovery round the busy world of minds, and hearts, presented to him by every man and woman of his acquaintance. He thought Anne Grey a pretty, simple girl, and that he should have much amusement in researches through that mind, and heart, and disposition.

Nous verrons! Men have hearts too,—and women's hearts—alas! they may be broken. Feelings may be trifled with—the scrutiny of a character—the hope to drive away the ennui of a rainy day in a

country-house—the vanity which had taken alarm at an indifferent tone from a pretty, and an indifferent person—all or any of these may lead to the devoted attention, the tone, the look, the deceit—the self-deceit! And then comes the woman's affection unalterably given;—the man's assertion to himself and others that 'he meant nothing.' Too late to say *that*, when the woman, deceived and confiding, has sunk under the shock of blighted hopes—Too late when, her health injured, her happiness gone—the once young, the beautiful, the gay, the light-hearted—has sunk into the being with beauty vanished, with feelings grown old—distrustful, hopeless, perhaps soured in temper, she either lives to swell the list of peevish, back-biting, tale-bearing, old maids, or she sinks at once more sadly, or perhaps more enviably, into the early grave. There she lies broken-hearted in the room where the sun had streamed in so often to waken her to bright images—to day-dreams of happiness—to the smiles of fond parents—to their approving looks—to the recollection of childish hours—of childish hopes—of a heart still child-like and innocent—gay, lovely, and confiding.—There she lies now, in that same room, a poor, broken-hearted thing—forlorn and hopeless.—There again she lies on that bed, where she had lain her head so peaceably in days gone by. The curtains are drawn around—the white sheet spread over—all white, cold, and still—there she lies, a corpse! And she has found her rest, and her bed, from which she had risen day by day to happiness, from which she had risen, flushed with hope to meet his return—that bed is her bed of death. And she is beautiful in death, though pain and mortal suffering have set their stamp on her brow. Sisters have wept—and parents prayed—and the last kiss has been given—the coffin is closed—and the burst of grief and horror over—All is still.

And where is he? the author of this wretchedness? where is he now? There in the world—gay and, as he would say, 'happy,' devoted to some new fair one—making new conquests—and meaning nothing. "Miss——is dead!" Does that strike sadly or with upbraiding on his ear? No. *She* is lying cold and stiff in her winding sheet. *He* says, "Ah poor girl! I knew her once"—and then, after a pause, some witticism is uttered—he laughs—he is gay;—and that is all the deceiver thinks of his victim.

CHAPTER VII.

AND what did Anne Grey think of Mr. Temple? She thought him very agreeable, and superior to every other person in the world. But he was doomed to be soon forgotten that night. Sophy began to talk about Lord Stoketon, and to this subject Anne gave all her interest.

Lord Stoketon had been very attentive that evening, and had said one or two 'very strange,' 'very particular things,' as Sophy confessed.

"What did Anne think of it?"

Anne said she thought there could be no doubt of his partiality.

"Oh no!" said Sophy, neither looking pleased, nor very much the reverse.

It was evident she did not wish to be assured by her confidante that Lord Stoketon was deeply in love with her. Of that she was convinced; but that of which she now wanted to be convinced, was whether she was in love with Lord Stoketon. This was the point on which Anne was to be useful.

Sophy blushed, and sighed, and almost cried; and said he was so rich, and had such a beautiful place in the country, and such a good house in town. She wished she knew whether she liked him. She thought she ought to accept him if he proposed; and he almost—he had said something that evening; then a great effort, and a turn away of the head from Anne, and a sigh—and then was forced out, "What do you think Captain Herbert would say, Anne, if he heard that I was going to be married?"

There was the point then! And now Sophy feels much happier—Now the confidante knows what is ailing, and all goes on smoothly. She can work at her difficulties. She can soften down Lord Stoketon's roughnesses. She can refine the gallant Captain away into a mere military coxcomb, a maker of love to all the pretty girls of a watering-

place. A little polish makes Lord Stoketon perfect—A very little brighter polish shows Captain Herbert a mere puppet—a man of soft speeches, rings, and chains. A still less skilful hand might use a bolder measure, and place in simple truth, and in bright array before the eyes of the wavering fair one, on the one side, houses, lands, carriages, jewels, coronet! On the other—one gig—one showy horse—a small house by the road side—a showy husband, using alone the showy gig, and the one showy horse, with the one showy, half-starved boy of all work—“All for myself, none for my little wife at home!”

This is what a skilful confidante might have done. But Anne Grey did not wish to be skilful for either party. She wished to know the truth—to see how far it would be desirable for Sophy's happiness that she should marry Lord Stoketon. She did not believe that Sophy had any feeling that might be called attachment to Captain Herbert. Her vanity had been flattered, and she had a little sentiment about this tall, handsome captain; and, when she thought of the chance of being married to another, he came into her mind. She thought how tall, and how handsome he was, and how many sighs he had uttered for her, and how many compliments he had paid her. Still Lord Stoketon was very much in love with her, and that is a great point with a good-hearted girl. He was rich, and a very good match, and that was another grand point, and she could find no real objection to his character.

Anne felt that Lord Stoketon could never have inspired her with a doubt as to whether she could accept him or not. *She* could not have loved him sufficiently, for there was nothing in his character to which she could have looked up with that admiration and respect which she thought so essential a feeling of a wife towards a husband. But she believed that Sophy would be very happy in accepting him; still in one respect only did she dare to advise; and that was with regard to Captain Herbert. She thought that Sophy ought to forget him, for even if he were a more estimable character, and she were certain of his attachment, poverty would forbid their union.

Sophy received the advice well, and Lord Stoketon was already greatly indebted to Anne. Anne praised him, and said that she wished him to succeed: she begged that Sophy would examine her own feelings, and if she felt certain that she could not accept

him, she urged her not to encourage him in hopes, that must end in disappointment to him; and Sophy kissed Anne—cried a little, and went to sleep determined to forget Captain Herbert, and accept Lord Stoketon as soon as he should propose. She dreamt of Captain Herbert, and woke crying because she thought he had been shot by Lord Stoketon.

“I wonder why it is,” said Lady Hadley, the next morning, when the Greys were out of the room, “that one feels to love some people directly—Now, Anne Grey—there is a sweetness in her countenance that makes it impossible not to feel sure that she is amiable, and that one ought to love her. Do you ever feel that?” said she, addressing Edward Temple.

“Certainly,” said he. “Who has not felt it? and with Anne Grey it is remarkably so.”

“I do love that girl!” interposed Lady Hadley.

Mr. Temple did not say, “Yes, so do I;” which perhaps he ought to have done, but went on, “She possesses all the requisites for being loved at first sight. Gentleness is written in her face—and she is perfectly feminine—feminine not only in appearance, but in refinement and simplicity of mind and manner. In this consists her greatest charm. She was made to be loved, and thought of as amiable and feminine. Who could love a woman whom they call masculine? ‘Masculine minded Miss Tomkins, I love you!’ No, that will never do. A man might say, ‘Masculine minded Miss Tomkins, I have a respect—an admiring fear of you!’ but never *love*. No—a woman, to be loved, should be thought of as gentle and feminine, let her talents be what they may. It would be the height of barbarity to think or speak of Anne Grey but as the gentle, the feminine Anne Grey!”

“Excellent! Mr. Temple,” exclaimed Lady Hadley, who had leant forward with eagerness, as he continued speaking with growing enthusiasm. “We are alone, I see,” said she, looking round. “That is excellent! To hear Mr. Temple warmed by the simplicity and quiet grace of a little Anne Grey, into a fine burst of enthusiasm. If I did not know you thoroughly as not a marrying man—as a despiser of our poor sex—as so *very* fastidious, I should say, *Voilà!* Mr. Temple is caught at last!”

Edward Temple laughed, and so did Lady Hadley.

“ And, my dear Lady Hadley, ” said he, “ you may say, if you like, that Edward Temple *is* caught at last. Do not think so ill of me as to believe that all that fine burst of enthusiasm was *a sham*.

really *am* caught by the charms of your favourite, and I admire her character exceedingly. Who knows that, in the depths of my chamber, I do not apostrophize her! Who knows that I do not walk up and down my room, calling on Anne Grey—sweet Anne Grey! Who knows that I have not already written a copy of verses, of which every other line ends with sweet Anne Grey, and to rhyme which I have exhausted all the days, and lays, and ways, and praise in the vocabulary. ”

“ Now don't be provoking, Mr. Temple, ” said Lady Hadley. “ I don't want you to make love to Anne Grey, as I know you are not a marrying man, but I want to know seriously, whether you do not admire her. No, now I see you are going to make some odious answer not in the least serious; so I will not use the word admire. But you know what I mean—love her—as I do:—like her as if you were—Ah! I see it is of no use! Well, you do admire Anne Grey, and like her, all but love her, spite of those pretended grave faces; and she shall punish you! Never was there a girl with more firmness of character with all her gentleness, and she shall punish you some time or other, when those bursts of virtuous enthusiasm become more frequent. ”

“ Must I say, thank you? ” said Edward Temple.

“ Say what you please, ” said Lady Hadley, as Anne Grey entered the room, “ for here she is. ”

Edward Temple gave a look at Lady Hadley, as much as to say—“ I must take care of myself; ” then walked to a table, took up a book, and began to read as intently as if he had been studying for a first class at Oxford.

Anne had observed his look as she entered the room, she had just heard Lady Hadley's “ Here she is; ” she felt sure that they had been speaking of her, and that Mr. Temple had probably been laughing at her. She could not think that Lady Hadley would. She felt very shy, and wished herself out of the room again; but Lady Hadley engaged her in conversation, and Anne soon forgot that Mr. Temple was in the room, and that he had been laughing at her.

Many of the party then came in, and drives and rides were talked of, and Lord Stoketon was very pressing for a riding and driving party to see———a kind of show place near, which could not possibly be arranged otherwise than for him to drive Miss Grey in Lady Hadley's poney carriage. No one except himself could be trusted to drive these ponies, which were sufficiently spirited to be almost useless. Lady Hadley had no idea of driving that day, and he was certain that every other carriage would be in requisition for the remainder of the party, and Miss Grey was the only person who was sufficiently courageous. So the party must take place; the rain which threatened would not come; and Lord Stoketon was so eager in persuading every one, and especially Mrs. Cartwright and Lady Mary Dalton, that it would be a delightful expedition, that it was at length determined on.

The carriages were ordered: Sir Henry Poynton, Lady Marston, Mrs. Cartwright, and Mr. Arthur Dalton (unalterably devoted man!) were doomed to the four horses, and more dignified barouche. Mr. and Mrs. Grey both begged to be excused going: Lady Hadley was decidedly not to go: Lord Hadley would go if there was room for him. The poney carriage was to convey Sophy and Lord Stoketon, and as they went with a large party, Mrs. Grey thought there could be no objection to their doing so. She hoped not, for nothing was so certain as a proposal in the tête à tête of a long drive. Miss Trevor, the Ladies Mary and Agnes Dalton, Anne, Mr. Cartwright, Mr. Temple, and Lord Hadley, were all to be 'stowed away' (as a sailor would express it) in a britchka and a gig.

Mr. Cartwright thought it "horrid dull work that two men should go together. Why would not one of the ladies follow Miss Grey's example, and trust herself to his driving. He was certain Miss Anne Grey was not a coward, for she had said she was not."

Anne trembled, and directly professed to prefer staying at home.

"A dull day at home rather than Cartwright," said Edward Temple, in a low voice to her. "I admire your taste, Miss Grey," in a louder voice.

Mr. Cartwright looked suspicious, and said in rather an affronted tone, "What is it in which Miss Anne Grey has just shown so much taste?"

“ Oh ! it was a little matter of opinion ! Miss Grey confessed that she agreed with me. You will excuse the vehemence of my applause, ” said he, turning to her, “ my approbation of the taste which coincided with my own. It must have been very clamorous, I fear, as it attracted Cartwright’s attention. ”

He looked at Anne with such a determined air of intelligence, that it made her feel angry and confused. She remembered Mr. Temple’s smile and look at Lady Hadley as she had entered the room, and she thought he must be wishing to turn her into ridicule.

She was thoroughly vexed, and the more so, as she saw Mr. Cartwright growing angry ; but the next moment Mr. Temple made his peace with her again by setting all right with Mr. Cartwright, and changing his manner towards herself to that of quiet politeness.

At length it was decided that the timid retiring Anne should be seated on the barouche-box with Mr. Temple, and this without much more than an—“ Oh no ! ” and a scarcely audible “ I should like quite as well to stay at home, ” on her part. Poor Mr. Cartwright was doomed to the gig and Lord Hadley, and then the cavalcade set out : Mrs. Grey had been to Sophy’s room to see that her bonnet was put on becomingly, and, satisfied she never looked so pretty, she cast an anxious glance after her and Lord Stoketon.

“ He must propose, ” thought she, as she watched Lord Stoketon’s excessive care to give Sophy cloaks and shawls enough ; saw him look delighted, and drive away ; then saw Anne on the barouche-box, and Edward Temple by her—wondered whether he was very rich, whether, though every one said he was too fastidious to marry, he still might not do so, and perhaps prefer a quiet country girl to a town-initiated lady or Miss.

That cavalcade was a pleasant sight to Mrs. Grey. But now will Lord Stoketon propose to Sophy ? Will Edward Temple fall in love with Anne, or will Anne fall in love with Edward Temple ? No. None of the three.

Lord Stoketon did not propose to Sophy ; and if Edward Temple had been asked whether he had fallen in love with Anne, he would have said “ No ; but I will if you wish it ; ” and if you had asked Anne Grey whether she had fallen in love with Edward Temple, she would have blushed and said, “ Oh no ! I never thought of it. ”

However, the expedition answered perfectly to the principal characters. They all said it had been a most delightful day, and that it was the most beautiful place ever seen. Every one agreed in this, excepting Lady Mary Dalton, and Mr. Cartwright. Mr. Cartwright did not find his attentions well received by Miss Grey or her sister, and he was tired of bestowing them on Lady Mary Dalton, who received them too well. Lady Mary was jealous of the Miss Greys. Every one seemed to be thinking of them, and her sweet smiles were unheeded by Lord Stoketon or Mr. Temple. Even old Sir Henry Poynton could think of nothing but Anne. So both Lady Mary and Mr. Cartwright thought———rather a poor place, and not at all worth the trouble of seeing. Lady Mary had said she wondered what people could discover so very charming in those Miss Greys. For her part she could not reconcile herself to that absence of a certain *ton*. She believed she was fastidious, but the slightest vulgarity always struck her immediately.

This was not said to Edward Temple, but within his hearing. He made use of it. Poor Lady Mary! What did you gain by it? Let the envious, the malicious, the ill-natured, sometimes ask themselves that little question.

But hark! those sweet dulcet tones—those notes soft and clear—the plaintive tenderness, the expressive richness of that gentle voice—Anne Grey is singing.

Anne had been asked to sing after having listened to a fine bravura of Lady Agnes Dalton's, performed, as she would have said, with spirit. Anne had sat down quite terrified; but luckily, in the middle of her song, Edward Temple began to tell an amusing story to Mrs. Cartwright, and Mrs. Cartwright laughed so heartily, and her laugh set so many of the party talking, that Anne ended by feeling that no one could be listening to her, so she went through her song more at ease. She began another, and by degrees, Edward Temple still making the agreeable, and (jointly with Mrs. Cartwright) a great noise, she became interested in the music, forgot that any one was in the room, and went on till she turned to that beautiful little song, 'Kathleen o' More.'

Anne loved music to her heart. She loved singing, and her soul went with her voice, and this song was one of her favourites.

She had forgotten her shyness, for she believed no one had been

listening to her; the piano-forte stood in a happy little recess, and she gave way to all her usual expression, to the touching plaintiveness and simplicity of the music; and the clear notes had burst from her lips, and had swelled into the fortes and died away into the melting pianos before she was aware that the talking had ceased, and all were listening to that one voice.

Edward Temple could no longer go on making the due quantity of noise with Mrs. Cartwright. He must be selfish, and listen, and be surprised, enraptured. Lady Hadley could talk no more. Lord Hadley—all who had any taste for music must listen, and there was a dead silence.

Anne's song was finished. Edward Temple seated himself by her.

“I have been thinking for the last few minutes of your song,” said he, “whether it were possible to hear anything more beautiful. What do you think? will you give us one more that I may have a chance of deciding?—or perhaps that one again?”

“Indeed,” said poor Anne, getting very shy, “I did not know that any one had been listening.”

“Perhaps you do not know that I have been listening the whole of the time,” answered he.

Several of the party now came up, and saved her the trouble of a reply. There were many requests for another song, and poor Anne never had felt so shy, and so determined never again to believe that people could not talk and listen at the same time.

“Do sing once more, Miss Grey,” said Mrs. Cartwright, with her fascinating smile.

“And will no one ask *me* to sing?” said Edward Temple jumping up, and taking the seat Anne had left. “Well then, since Miss Grey will not, I will sing without being asked.”

“Oh! do,” said Mrs. Cartwright. “That charming ‘Eldest Daughter,’ or any other of your funny songs;” and Edward Temple was singing and playing in a moment a comic song, acting it at Mrs. Cartwright, who was in fits of laughter; and Anne Grey retired from the scene of danger to enjoy the song of her deliverer at a prudent distance.

The point was gained; she was forgotten. The comic song over, Mrs. Cartwright was in raptures, and “dying to hear another:”

she was enchanted that Edward Temple should have thought fit to be amusing for her sake twice in one evening; but Mr. Temple had no idea of flattering Mrs. Cartwright with any more attention. He left the instrument and was talking quietly to Mr. Grey the next minute; and no one would have supposed it the same person who had been playing a comic part but an instant before for the amusement of a Mrs. Cartwright.

It will be believed that the sociable drive that morning to——had not passed wholly in silence between Edward Temple and Anne Grey. It had, in fact, been very agreeable. They had conversed a great deal together. He had dropped the tone of satire, and had been quiet and sensible; and the mutual impression from the graver style of conversation was decidedly favourable.

Edward Temple thought Anne even more intelligent than he had imagined; and this was saying much. He had been before aware of her simple modesty and amiable disposition, but he could not be aware to its full extent of all below the surface;—her justness of opinion—her perfect taste—her quick appreciation of the beautiful in works of art—her unvarying elegance of mind. He had the power of drawing out characters, of interesting people in the right way, and of leading them to speak of their feelings and sentiments. Anne felt quite at ease with him during the drive, and she began to think of him less as the clever, satirical Mr. Temple of society, than as the person whose sentiments she had found, with surprise and pleasure, coinciding with her own. She thought him still, as she had thought him before, more agreeable than any other person she knew.

It seemed impossible to listen to him and not have the impression of hearing that which was new, and yet so true and just, that it did not startle the listener, or seem unnatural. There was nothing heavy in his conversation: the gravest subject might be discussed seriously and at length, and though never treated lightly, or decked with unbecoming levity, yet it was never with him the dry ponderous thing that most serious conversations become. “In matters of taste how delightful,” thought Anne, “to hear him talk. He seemed to think with me, and expressed what I have so often felt. How he leads one into his enthusiasm! It was very strange;” half sighed Anne, as she loosened her hair that night, “that our sentiments should have been so much the same, that after so short an acquaint-

ance he should seem to understand my feelings better than any one I ever knew before."

Lord Stoketon had not yet proposed! He was relying on a few more days at Hadley. Better enjoy the present moment, and make assurance doubly sure. "Should she reject me," thought he. "I wish I knew quite what she thought! Well, I will leave it a day or two."

The breakfast at Hadley the next morning was, as usual, a sociable and happy meal. Every one seemed in excellent spirits, and Miss Trevor talked and made tea to perfection. It was a lovely day, and another excursion was thought of.

"Will you trust me to drive your ponies again, Lady Hadley?" said Lord Stoketon. "I saw them before breakfast, and they look fresher than ever! They are the best pair of ponies I ever saw—never flagged the whole way. I should like just such a pair if," *sotto voce* to Sophy, who, as usual, sat next him; "there were a lady to use them. My mother and sisters never drive, they are such cowards."

The party was settled, and Anne wondered a little whether she should be seated by Mr. Temple again. Yes! she heard from the other end of the table that he meant to go; and something, she thought, he said, about "the arrangement having been perfect yesterday." Anne thought she heard this, but Sir Henry Poynton would ask her a question just at the time.

However that drive was fated never to take place. The letters came in. One was given to Mr. Grey—a black seal, and broad black-edged paper. Mr. Grey's colour came and went as he opened it. He thought of his two sons, both absent, and fearing for them, it was almost a relief to find that the letter announced the death of his brother-in-law, Mr. Daventry.

The consequence was an immediate departure from Hadley.

Lord Stoketon had time to assure himself that the death of her uncle was not a matter of grief to Sophy, for neither she, nor Anne, had ever seen him but once, and to try to be satisfied, that at least she was spared this affliction; and Edward Temple had time to admire Anne's look of consideration for poor Sophy—her total forgetfulness of self—her proper degree of feeling—and her heart-felt exclamation of "Poor, poor girl!" as Mr. Daventry's only daughter was named. Then, as soon as ladies' maids and footman and coach-

man could be bustled into activity, and the loss of their dinner, adieus were uttered, and Lord Stoketon pressed Sophy's hand, and muttered something like "God bless you," and hurried away to hide his feelings; Sir Henry called out to Anne not to forget her old friend, and to hope they should meet again to tell her that other little story; Lady Hadley kissed her affectionately; Edward Temple looked grave, and considerate; they shook hands, and Anne thought he had pressed hers, and she saw he felt for her; good-byes came from the more indifferent portion of the party, and the carriage drove off.

CHAPTER VIII.

WHILST the carriage is conveying the family of the Greys, as rapidly as possible to Weston, whence Mr. Grey is immediately to set off to Mr. Daventry's place, about a hundred miles distant, I must give my reader some little information of Mr. Daventry, and the circumstances attendant on his death.

Mr. Daventry was the husband of an only sister of Mr. Grey's, who had married him against the wishes of her family. Charlotte Grey, a gentle amiable girl, was bent upon marrying Reginald Daventry, and, like other gentle amiable girls, she was very meek and obedient on all other subjects, and very obstinate on this. Her friends had fears for her happiness, and their fears were realized. She experienced that complete desolation of heart, which springs from the unkindness and neglect of a husband who is loved and obeyed with the same ardour and affection as at the moment when he vowed to love and cherish her in return.

One daughter was born, and Mrs. Daventry died of a broken heart: it was really of a broken heart, although Mr. Daventry did assure himself and his friends that this could not have been the case, as it was notorious she had died of a consumption. Her friends allowed that she did. Mr. Grey, amongst others, allowed it; but

he could not again bear the sight of the man who had caused her so to die; nor was it required of him, for Mr. Daventry knew that he deserved to be hated, and he hated Mr. Grey—cordially hated him.

Mr. Grey loved his sister. It was with bitterness of heart that he had seen her the victim of a being such as Reginald Daventry. He had seen it for years, and without the power of averting it. He saw the gentle and affectionate girl, she who had been the playmate of his childhood, growing old with sorrow; patient, unrepining, loving still: many a bitter hour it had cost him, and if there was a man in the world towards whom he could not exercise the command to ‘Love thy neighbour as thyself,’ it was to the husband of his sister.

Sometimes he had made an effort for her, but it had failed—partly, as he feared, by his own imprudence. Sometimes, in the indignation of the moment he had departed from the command of self, which he knew to be the safest conduct for his sister’s peace, and it made him a bitter enemy in Reginald Daventry.

When he heard of the birth of a child, he hoped that the gift of this little being might effect a change, but it was a vain hope. It only seemed to add to the evil. It was a girl, and Mr. Daventry wished for a boy. Mrs. Daventry lived for some years after the birth of her child, gradually sinking under disappointment and grief. She too had vainly encouraged a hope, and when this hope was destroyed, she had fondly cherished another, that a boy might be given her, and that he might bring back some little share of her husband’s affection; but disappointment succeeded again, and when, two years after the birth of her daughter, Mrs. Daventry sank into the grave, Mr. Grey could only rejoice through his tears that her sufferings were at an end.

He had seen Mr. Daventry soon after her death—it was a hard task, and Mr. Grey hoped not to be obliged to see him again. He knew that he should not be allowed to be of use to his sister’s child; or he would gladly have endured any thing for her sake.

Mr. Daventry had talents, was agreeable in society, was good-looking, and had every outward accomplishment which might excuse Charlotte Grey for having obstinately determined to marry him. But it was on the exterior only that his attractions dwelt; profligate, extravagant, violent-tempered, and proud, comprising in one cha-

racter the faults of many; such was Reginald Daventry! One redeeming trait at length appeared. He loved his daughter; and to this daughter, whom from an infant Mr. Grey had never beheld, he was now summoned. He forgot the wrong her father had done, and he obeyed the summons, eager to afford consolation to the poor lonely girl, who had lost her only friend.

When he reached Mr. Daventry's residence, he was received by the medical man, who seemed the only person his illness had summoned near him: no relations, no friends were there, to soothe his sufferings, to regret his loss, and to comfort his daughter.

Shortly after his arrival the door opened, and a maid-servant entered to tell Mr. Grey that her mistress desired to see him. His heart beat as he thought of beholding his niece—of seeing perhaps a likeness of his poor sister.

He followed the servant, and in a few minutes he was in the presence of Charlotte Daventry. But it was not the youthful representative of the Charlotte Daventry whom he had loved: there was no resemblance to affect him. It was Reginald Daventry whom she resembled, and the likeness was so strong, that any other moment Mr. Grey would have recoiled with a shudder. A burst of grief followed his entrance. Mr. Grey felt for her, and the recollection of her being his sister's child overpowered him. He wept with her; he tried to soothe her, but she drew away, and only burst into fresh grief.

At length she composed herself, and in a low voice said, "All is left to your care. Here is a paper, it is my father's." She almost shrieked as she uttered his name. "All directions are in this; take it, Sir. You will leave me now;" and Mr. Grey saw that it would be only cruel to stay with her.

He left the room, and as he closed the door he heard the cries of suppressed agony bursting forth—he heard the screams of uncontrolled grief, and he never forgot the horror of those sounds.

He hesitated whether to return. He felt it might be worse than useless; but it was too dreadful! and he determined, at least, to try. He went back and opened the door. There she lay stretched on the sofa, her arms tossing abroad, whilst she uttered almost shrieks of agony. His entrance aroused her. She started up, and seeing Mr. Grey, screamed with horror, and throwing forward her arms, pointed towards the door.

“ I asked to be left,” said she. “ There is your way.”

Mr. Grey shuddered as he saw her look of repugnance, and he felt, indeed, that his presence was useless. He withdrew to another room, and there examined the papers which she had placed in his hands. One of these was a letter addressed to himself by Mr. Daventry. It was a dying appeal. It asked pardon for his past conduct, recommended his daughter to Mr. Grey's compassion, and requested, as the highest favour he could grant, that he would take the poor fatherless girl under his roof. He left directions that Mr. Grey should be remunerated as far as his daughter's means would allow; but the extravagance which, in his letter, he professed to bewail, had reduced his fortune to barely a competency; and Charlotte would scarcely have the means to live, as became her station, if Mr. Grey would not, in charity, allow her a home with his daughters.

He had not constituted him legally her guardian, but he appealed to his compassion to bestow on her the care of one.

The letter was powerfully worded; it was a strong appeal to the feelings. Reginald Daventry was a clever man, and he made use of his talents where it was necessary. His appeal was not made in vain. Mr. Grey felt, as he read his last letter, that he might perhaps have done him injustice. Charlotte Daventry was told that, if she felt equal to so early a removal, she should return with Mr. Grey, to Weston, the day after the funeral, that she might henceforward look upon himself and Mrs. Grey as a second father and mother, and Weston as her home.

The offer was accepted with gratitude. On their second meeting she had been perfectly composed, and asked pardon for the vehement betrayal of her grief on their first interview. “ Her affliction,” she said, “ had bewildered her.” She thanked Mr. Grey with the warmest expressions of gratitude for his kindness—looked more than she expressed, and said, as she pressed his hands in both of hers, “ All the duty and affection of a child to a parent I shall owe you, and you will never fail to receive all that the warmest gratitude can ensure. If I fail—if I seem perverse—if I am displeasing to you,” her voice faltered; “ if I fail to inspire you with affection—will you think of my poor mother?” The tears fell, and she could say no more. Mr. Grey pressed her to him, kissed her cheek, which was wet with his tears as well as her own, and faltered out an as-

urance of unceasing care to supply to her the place of a parent.

Feelings such as those displayed by Charlotte Daventry, in this little scene, gave Mr. Grey real satisfaction. He hoped that, although resembling her father in face, the Charlotte Daventry now about to enter his family, and to be the companion of his daughters, was in other respects like the Charlotte Daventry whom he had once so fondly loved as Charlotte Grey.

But once or twice, during the days which elapsed before the funeral, was he painfully reminded of her likeness to her father. When they had been talking together, when she seemed deeply impressed with his kindness, she would suddenly burst into a wild fit of grief, and, as he tried to console her, she would turn on him a look, such as her father could have given—would shrink from him, and rush out of the room.

The funeral at length, (and what an at length did it appear!) the funeral at length was over; and Charlotte Daventry, composed and almost cheerful, was conveyed from her home to become one of a new family—to leave behind all that she had ever loved, and to place herself amongst entire strangers, dependent on their kindness, and I might almost say, their bounty.

Mr. Grey would hardly have believed it possible, had he been told a month back, that he should now be seated in a carriage with his niece Charlotte Daventry by his side journeying towards Weston to introduce her there as to her home—that she should have been confided to him by Reginald Daventry himself—that he should experience no repugnance to the charge, and that he should even feel almost in charity with this very Reginald Daventry: yet so it was.

We will leave the character of Charlotte Daventry to time, and the ingenuity of the reader to discover; and once more allude to Mr. Daventry.

It has been said that he had one good trait, and that one was love for his daughter. How he came to love seems an enigma. Charlotte Daventry had seemed born to be disliked by him; first, because she was a girl, and he had wished for a boy; and next, because he had never been known to love anything. She had begun life with a positive stock of hatred from him. The baby was obliged to be smuggled out of the way, and all doors kept scrupulously closed, for fear “papa,” or “Mr. Daventry,” as he was called, should hear

her voice. She was eight years old before he had ever spoken to her, except to utter a cross word, or a scold ; not the gentle, or cross word of a mama, who professes not to spoil her darling children. No, the being, come to years of discretion, might have trembled to hear the words which saluted the youthful Charlotte's ear.

Yet, after the age of eight, a change took place. The child had unconsciously gone the right way to work. She had been in the room when Mr. Daventry was speaking to some one, had understood what had been said, and made some extraordinary remark. The father had been struck. " That child will be a wonder, " said he ; and from that hour he made her his constant companion, and between father and child, as the child grew into maturity, not a thought or a secret was withheld from each other.

Charlotte Daventry was in her eighteenth year when her father died. There was little to attract attention in her appearance. She was rather tall, her hair and eyes were dark, she was pale, and had no peculiar brilliancy of complexion. Her figure was good, and she had fine eyes. She could lay claim to no other positive beauty, yet those who were often in her society, and had conversed with her, would have awarded her still higher pretensions to personal attractions.

It will be thought extraordinary that having been the friend and confidante of such a father, Charlotte should have had any good qualities, and yet the Greys would have told you that she was a good, amiable girl. Still more extraordinary does it seem that Mr. Daventry should leave his daughter to the care of Mr. Grey, — leave her wholly dependent for kindness on him towards whom he felt as towards an enemy.

Reginald Daventry had hated Mr. Grey : hated him for his interference on behalf of Mrs. Daventry : hated him because he knew that his sister had been cruelly used by him—knew that Mr. Grey must despise and abhor him—hated him because he felt his superiority in virtue—hated him for his prosperity ; even for his moderation in prosperity ; even for his forbearance towards himself. He detested him no less for his interfering so little, than for his interfering at all : he was irritated at his showing so little indignation, when conscience, that busy sting within, told him it must be felt — he hated him even because he was the brother of the poor, patient,

amiable being he had injured ; and yet he left his only child, the only being whom he loved, to the care of this very person !

And why was it ? could it be that the approach of death had softened the heart of even Reginald Daventry ?—that he repented ?

Mr. Grey hoped it might be so ; in charity he believed what he hoped , and as the poor orphan was seated beside him on her journey from the home of her affection, from the remains of her father—he felt that that father might be forgiven—that he might have done him an injustice—that he might, indeed, be worthy of forgiveness, and from his heart he did forgive him.

Let Mr. Grey believe as in charity he hoped, but for us, we must look behind the scenes ; we must hear the father in his hours of unreserve. Let us hear him when, weakened by illness, he is seated with his child conversing in the freedom of unrestrained confidence.

Often they talked long and vehemently together. Sometimes he would tell of his hatred to Mr. Grey. One day he had been more than usually violent. Charlotte had listened and learnt almost to hate the man whom her father so abhorred.

“ Charlotte, ” said he, after a bitter invective against Mr. Grey, “ tell me that you hate this man—that you will hate him : tell me, do you feel that you could love, or even endure, the man who has wronged your father ? ”

“ Oh no, no ! ” said Charlotte. “ I cannot love the man who has done you wrong. Dear father, be satisfied, ” and she clung around him to quiet his emotion.

“ If there is a man I hate in the world, ” continued he, “ it is William Grey—Charlotte, ” addressing his daughter, and becoming calm in his manner, whilst he fixed his eyes on her. “ Charlotte you will have much in your power. Remember my words.—You will have much in your power, ” said he, speaking slowly and seriously, earnestly looking at her as if he wished her to weigh each word. “ I cannot live long. I have that about me which must soon end in death. Charlotte you will be left to *his* care—the care of this very man. ” He held her hand : he looked at her again. The expression of that look could not be mistaken : he meant it should not. It was hate—deadly hate—revenge !

It *was* understood. He saw that it was, and he withdrew his gaze, and unclasped her hand, which he had held firmly grasped in

his as he spoke, "You will live with him, Charlotte," said he, in an almost mild tone: "yes; you will have much in your power." He paused. A smile came across his face, and curled his lip. "Charlotte, did you ever hear of the man who warmed a serpent in his bosom? and then—" he paused—"and then—what did it do, my child?"

Charlotte looked at her father with intelligence, and the smile was repeated on her countenance. "It stung him," said she, in a quiet tone. It was enough—father and daughter understood one another.

On another occasion he spoke to his daughter of her prospects.—"Charlotte," said he, "your ambition must be to make a great marriage, and if you chance to fix on one whose affections have been given—who is the object of love to some fond, foolish girl,"—he lowered his voice, and his eyes beamed on her with intelligence—"your dearest companion and *cousin*—let this be the man—let him be the object of your ambition. Were I alive then—did I see you successful—then I should say you had made a great marriage—you had fulfilled your duty."

CHAPTER IX.

WE will now return with Mr. Grey and Charlotte Daventry to Weston. A letter had informed Mrs. Grey of the circumstances that had occurred, and that she must prepare herself for a new inmate in the family.

Mrs. Grey was an excellent woman, and very unselfish and unworldly where her heart was touched; but unluckily on this occasion it was obstinately bent on not being touched. She had seen very little and had heard a great deal of Mr. Daventry, and all she had heard made her think him, and not unjustly, "a shocking man!"

"So very wicked to be so uncivil to Mr. Grey, and to use his poor

wife so ill ! Such a good woman as she was, for she was Mr. Grey's sister, and her sister-in-law ! she was sure he was a very shocking man, and it was so provoking of him to die just then. Certainly his death was no loss—on the contrary it was a very good thing.” (Good Mrs. Grey !) “ If he had only waited two days later nobody would have missed him, except his daughter, and even she would do much better without him.”

If thus Mrs. Grey could so ill reconcile herself to an unavoidable evil, it will be imagined how ill she could submit to one which might have been avoided. When she read Mr. Grey's letter announcing the intelligence of Charlotte Daventry's being left to his care, and that in less than a week she was coming to reside in their family, nothing could exceed her dismay.

That Mr. Daventry, that shocking man, should have thought of leaving his girl to Mr. Grey's care—that the daughter of this shocking man—a girl whom she had never seen, and whom she was sure was as shocking as her father, should be coming to live in the house with them, and to share the advantages of her own daughters, and all without asking her advice or opinion ! It was monstrous !

No wonder that she did not bear it quite heroically, and that when Mr. Grey arrived at Weston with Charlotte Daventry, the pleasure of seeing her dear good husband again could not quite put her into a good humour, or make her feel very cordial towards his companion.

It is true Charlotte Daventry's black dress did something, and Mr. Grey's pale, tired look did a great deal more, and then the kind heart, and the affectionate disposition began to have their sway.

She began to feel about Charlotte Daventry that, “ poor thing, she was certainly very much to be pitied ; ”—that “ she could not help having had such a father ; ” and that “ she seemed a quiet inoffensive girl, not to be compared to her own daughters in beauty ; ” and before the evening was over, she had shed some tears for her, and kindly taken her up to her room when she expressed a wish to retire for the night, offered her some gruel or white wine whey, because she thought she must have caught cold on the journey—had actually fetched her own peculiar bottle of camphor julep, and had sent her own maid to assist in undressing her, and then Mrs. Grey began to

think that it was not so foolish a thing in Mr. Grey to have brought her, and felt that there was something not so unpleasant in being kind, and in giving up her peculiar bottle of camphor julep and her own maid.

She felt like a heroine, and called Charlotte Daventry 'poor thing,' for we do not know exactly how long afterwards.

Various were the feelings called forth in the different members of the Grey family by the events of the last week. William and Henry were both at home. William had been called away from a pleasant party, and as he was not acquainted with Mr. Daventry, and could not like what he had heard of him, he may stand excused for in some measure sharing Mrs. Grey's feelings on the subject.

Henry might perhaps be excused for a contrary feeling. He did not know 'old Daventry,' 'he supposed he would be no loss,' and as by his death he was brought home from school, and no one was sorry, he did not see why he should be so. To tell the truth he was rather glad, for he wanted to see Anne, and ask about Hadley, and also to beg she would get permission for him to belong to the cricket-club.

Sophy might be expected to enter fully into Mrs. Grey's feelings, and she was vexed, not so much for the loss of Lord Stoketon's proposal, as for the loss of the Archery, and of the sight of Captain Herbert, "just to decide what she felt concerning him," and "whether she could, with a free conscience, give her hand to Lord Stoketon."

As to Anne, she alone, of all the family, felt as Mr. Grey had done. She had been very sorry to leave Hadley, but selfishness stopped there, and all her interest was given to her poor cousin, all her pity was bestowed on her, all her hope that her father might sooth the orphan's sorrows.

When Mr. Grey's letter arrived, giving a favourable account of her manner, and telling of her distress, and her expressions of gratitude, Anne felt a still warmer interest. She rejoiced that the poor orphan was to come among them, and hoped that she might be able to comfort her. No repining thought, that but for Mr. Daventry's death she should have enjoyed two more days of Edward Temple's society, came across her mind : all considerations of self were forgotten in the fear that her father would be worn and fa-

tigued by his painful duties, and in the wish to sooth her poor deserted cousin.

She anxiously expected her arrival, and no voice was so kind as Anne Grey's to welcome the fatherless Charlotte Daventry, no hand so readily extended, no tear so ready to flow, or so restrained from flowing, lest it should affect the poor sufferer for whom it would have fallen—no attention so unobtrusive, yet so watchful, and unceasing—and the poor sobbing Charlotte felt it to be so as she was left alone in her chamber that first sad night, when placed alone among strangers, and strangers who, as she knew, disliked and despised her father.

We pass over a few months, and we shall find Charlotte Daventry comfortably established at Weston, the family there ceasing to feel as if anything remarkable had occurred, and Charlotte herself showing but few traces of grief.

Mr. and Mrs. Grey had begun to think of her as a good, quiet girl.

Mr. Grey had again settled peaceably to the enjoyment of his books and arm-chair, and sometimes wondered to himself whether all that he had seen of Charlotte Daventry, on his first introduction, were not a dream; and then he resumed his books, and forgot to wonder. He was always kind and affectionate to her, but, as he saw that Mrs. Grey and his daughters were so likewise, he did not trouble himself to be peculiarly attentive; but Anne received several extra kisses for her never-failing consideration for her cousin.

Mrs. Grey had thought that Charlotte was a very good girl, and that it was very good of Mr. Grey and herself to have given her a home, and not unpleasant to themselves, as she was “so useful and good tempered, and so handy, and never seemed to mind doing anything for any one.”

William said that Charlotte “was a good-humoured girl, after all, and not a bore; that she had a good *tournure*—prodigious fine eyes, and would be really handsome if she had a better complexion;” and he was sufficiently impressed with the respect due to her good qualities, to demur in asking her to ring the bell, and always said, “May I trouble you”—or, “I’ll thank you to ring the bell, as you

are near it ;” and even made a sort of apology for taking her seat, or her book. Charlotte seemed to think it quite right she should give up her book, or her seat to her cousin William, and ring the bell, near it or not, and William liked her as a good useful girl.

Henry said she was excellent fun sometimes—avowed that she walked very well, was a famous hand at battledore and shuttlecock, and he was sure could play at cricket if she would try ; he must say that sometimes he almost liked her better than Sophy, for Sophy had grown such a fine lady. Still she was nothing to Anne, but then who was ?

“ I wish, with all my heart, Sophy were married,” continued he, “ to some fine fellow with four-in-hand, and plenty of riding horses ; one to spare always for friends you know, Anne ! And then what fun we should have here at home. You would be Miss Grey, and Rover might come into the drawing-room just now and then—you would allow that Anne ? and you would not mind a little whistling outside the house, or even perhaps along the passage, and through the hall, when I was in capital spirits !”

To return to the opinions formed of Charlotte Daventry, it is sufficient to say that Anne loved her and still felt pity for her, and that Sophy entrusted her with some of her secrets.

What Charlotte Daventry thought of her relations it is useless to say. She appeared contented, and as happy as her recent affliction would admit. She seemed very willing to love and to be loved by them all, and to consider them superior to herself.

It will be believed that the visit to Hadley was sometimes talked of by Sophy and Anne, and that Mrs. Grey had neither forgotten to think nor to speak of Lord Stoketon, nor every now and then to be angry with poor Mr. Daventry ; for though she now constantly appended ‘ the ‘ poor ’ to his name, as the weeks passed on, and no letter franked ‘ Stoketon ’ arrived, it was hard to suppose she could help lamenting that he had not deferred his death for a day or two.

Moreover, with all her ingenuity (and Mrs. Grey was an ingenious woman), she could not exactly foresee how they were to meet again. She thought of several places, and asked Mr. Grey several times whether he did not think it likely they should meet Lord Stoketon on such or such an occasion ? but Mr. Grey never would say more than “ I don’t know, my dear ;” and if, not satisfied with that matter

of fact assertion of inferior foresight, she urged for a better answer, she only obtained, "I really cannot say, for I have heard nothing about Lord Stoketon, and I know nothing of his friends and acquaintance."

Mrs. Grey was really justifiable in saying to herself, sometimes, "How provoking Mr. Grey is!" for he ought to have been anxious about Lord Stoketon, as he believed that Sophy was not indifferent to him, and though thoughts and wonders and guesses were of no avail, he should have thought and wondered and guessed to a certain extent. His daughter's future happiness was in question, and yet he would be blind and deaf, and eat his dinner, and read his books, and be healthy and blooming, and let poor Mrs. Grey fidget alone, and run the risk of having to advertise for an appetite, and a lost shade of vermilion, without sharing in one single fraction of her fidget!

Mr. Grey was in fact too easy and indolent.

I have to relate what Sophy and Anne said and thought about Hadley, and whether Anne made any confidences! whether the name of Edward Temple was mentioned, and whether Anne confessed, with many a blush and many a sigh, the possession of one interesting relic to be treasured up, and looked at, and—(shall we say it?)—kissed! the possession of a corner of a newspaper, which had been actually watched from between the agonizing pressure of his finger and thumb—the torn sheet of paper on which his very hand had traced, with manly elegance, these words, 'My dear Sir,' and had left it because he thought 'My dear Sir,' not dear enough to be worthy of a letter; or perhaps, still more valuable, the very pen with which he had written.

Did Anne Grey make any such confession? no, no, she had none to make: she was not a girl to preserve relics—to treasure up bits of paper that were not meant to be treasured up. Alas! she was never intended for a heroine!

It must be owned that she thought of Edward Temple with interest, and whenever her spirits were particularly good, and she looked forward to future plans, and probabilities of happiness, the figure of Edward Temple was always supplied with an exalted pedestal in the galleries, or gardens of her castles in the air. She never forgot that there was such a person when she indulged in pleasing reveries,

and she wondered, with no little interest, whether she should ever meet him again.

But still she had no confidences to make, and she was quite ready to listen to Sophy ; to wish and hope and conjecture and advise ; to repeat over and over again the same wishes, hopes, and conjectures, without a single impatient look, a single shuffle of the chair, or wistful glance towards the window. She patiently listened to the oft-repeated words of “ I really have a great regard for Lord Stoke-ton,” and “ do not really care for Captain Herbert,” and “ did you see what a nice open carriage Lord Stoketon had ? He said he got it because he thought his sisters would like it. What a good brother he must be ! He says that Alford is a beautiful place, just the size of Hadley, and there is an excellent conservatory, and it is in a very good neighbourhood. I wonder whether we shall meet him again, Anne ? ”

To all such remarks, as often as they were repeated, did Anne reply with the same unwearied interest. She thought it natural that Sophy should require her to do so, and she wished her to speak of her feelings, for as her opinions were not always consistent, she hoped to be useful in correcting the errors into which she occasionally fell. She wished that Lord Stoketon should be prized for something better than his rank and fortune, and by leading Sophy to compare his sincere attachment and real virtues, with the false and frippery character, the dangling, exaggerated passion of Captain Herbert, she hoped from such a comparison, that Sophy would learn to prize and love the virtues of the one, as placed against the faults and tinsel follies of the other. In the one case to make her love the virtues themselves from attachment to the person to whom they belonged—in the other to make her dislike the person himself from dislike to the faults of which he was possessed.

And this was not so difficult a task. Human frailty was on Anne’s side, for rank and fortune were with the virtues—poverty and insignificance with the faults ; and even human frailty, as a means, may be rendered available in the attainment of human virtue.

Sophy began to speak and think highly of domestic virtues, of the charm of warm-heartedness, of the value of steady principles, the comparative superiority of honest sincerity and manly bluntness, over the studied softness and the heartless selfishness of the finished

coxcomb ; and, fortunately, the blunt, manly character had a title, a fortune, a house in Town and Country, and a charming carriage ; and the finished coxcomb had nothing but one small gig—one large trotting horse, besides his hunters,—one small boy, and one great and highly prized self.

So while Sophy Grey holds the balance, up flies Captain Herbert in the scale, lighter than air ; whilst quietly and easily sits my Lord Stoketon resting on the ground, and wealth and rank, and a warm and constant heart, are at her feet.

Ah ! Sophy Grey—happy, happy woman ! Acknowledge and confess your happiness.—Prize the gift of that heart—It is gilded and titled, but never mind ! You need not be so very disinterested, for you are not a heroine !

But now that Sophy is in a proper frame of mind to accept all these good things, there remains a difficulty —Is Lord Stoketon so very constant ? How is this to be ascertained ?

We must diffuse the genial spirit of invitation, we must inspire some of the many ciphers who contribute to our good neighbourhood, with a propensity to distribute those little airy messages made up of ‘ May I have the pleasure,’ and ‘ It will give us much pleasure,’ etc. We must wish that the stable-yard at Weston should ring with the clatter of horses’ hoofs, and Mr. and Mrs. Grey be kept in constant occupation breaking open seals, and taking from their envelopes the smooth scented enclosure, filled with sweet and honied words, still sweeter than the perfumed paper which conveyed them.

This must be our wish, that thus Sophy Grey may have an opportunity of meeting Lord Stoketon again.

CHAPTER X.

WE must suppose that, amongst the many good neighbours whom the Greys possessed, there were not a few who visited Weston when it was known that Mr. Daventry had left an only girl to the care of Mr. Grey.

It was impossible that any one could give information on the subject of Charlotte Daventry, as no one had as yet seen her; and though many conjectured that she was pale and interesting; and others that she was quite the contrary, and had shown remarkable hardness of heart; still there were none who could speak from fact, and all were anxious to judge for themselves, and see how poor Mr. Grey looked under the infliction of a niece.

All were eager to find out whether the stories were true of his having at first refused the charge, till Mr. Daventry, on his death-bed, holding Mr. Grey's hand in his, had made him faithfully promise to do so on pain—some said, of being visited by his ghost,—some said, merely of a dying man's curse;—whether it were true that William Grey was already desperately in love with her, and that they were to be married as soon as her mourning was over;—whether it was true, that the orphan was plunged in such deep affliction that she had scarcely spoken, and never smiled since, and that she intended wearing mourning all her life, and had made a determination never to marry—but it will be an endless task to tell all the reasons why people were anxious to call at Weston.

One other will suffice, and that was, simply to ascertain whether she were pretty or ugly. But this was a question upon which no two people could agree, even after having seen her; and for some time the neighbourhood of Weston was left in doubt whether Miss Daventry were a beauty or not.

The earliest visitor at Weston, after the ordinary period of seclusion had elapsed, was Lady Downton; who, though such a sad invalid, contrived once or twice in the year, on great occasions, to get out to see her 'dear friends,' who had been 'so kind to her.' This was one of the great occasions which called Lady Downton forth from her luxurious sofa, and the first of the carriages that drove up to the door at Weston was hers.

As she moved languidly into the room, her eyes were anxiously cast around to discover the interesting orphan, but, alas! nothing was to be seen but Mrs. Grey, with a large work-basket before her, William Grey's long legs stretching forth from the mysteries of an arm-chair, the back of which was turned towards the door, and Anne Grey seated at her drawing table with brush in hand.

Lady Downton was disappointed, but still, having been admitted

was something; and as Sophy was likewise out of the room, she hoped that the cousins were together, and that before long they might both appear.

At any rate she could hear something about her, and she could learn many particulars, which could not be learnt in her presence. “Ah! dear Mrs. Grey, how are you? I have felt so much for you!” but Lady Downton spoke her feelings doubtfully, for she was not sure which line to take—whether the Greys were to be pitied or not, for the loss of a man whom they never saw, and whose character had been notoriously unamiable; so she took the safest course, and threw a good deal of feeling and commiseration into her manner. If it so chanced that it was not required in the exact manner supposed; still there was cause for pity in Sophy and Anne’s having been kept out of gaiety for so many weeks, and she continued, “I have felt so much for you all.”

Mrs. Grey’s unconscious, comfortable look of undisturbed contentment and peace of mind, whilst she stared a very little as if forgetting exactly why she was to be pitied, set Lady Downton right.

“You are very kind,” said Mrs. Grey smiling, and Lady Downton saw there was no cause for any more pity, except for herself.

“Ah! I am glad to see you so well. It is such an age since I have seen you, that I really feared you might not have continued well all the time.”

“My mother is not subject to bad health, and never was better in her life,” said William Grey, who disliked Lady Downton, and her tiresome complaints. He loved to give her blunt answers and cut her short whenever he could. “I hope Sir John is well?” said he, knowing Sir John to be the least interesting subject to her Ladyship.

“Ah! thank you—so kind in you! He is perfectly well—but, my dear Anne, do let me see you and hear you speak,” said she, turning the subject, and extending a hand to Anne, who had been vainly hoping to continue her drawing unmolested. “Do let me hear a little of yourself, now your poor old friend has made the effort of coming to see you: indeed it is a sad effort; but for the sake of such kind friends I would not have attempted it. So then you have got a new companion, poor thing!” glancing towards William, for that story might be true; but no change in his colour

appeared, and it must be decidedly contradicted. "I shall be the first to do it," thought she.

Anne supposed that Lady Downton spoke of her cousin, and said every thing proper about the pleasure of having her for a companion.

"I suppose she does not yet appear in society!" said Lady Downton.

"I don't know," said Anne. "We have never yet seen any one excepting our own relations; but I do not suppose that Charlotte would be afraid of being seen, though she would not go out at present. She and Sophy are just set off on a long walk."

"Not afraid of being seen," thought Lady Downton. "It was said ironically—Depend upon it she is a bold dashing girl, with no feeling whatever; and Anne does not like her. She and Sophy are gone for a long walk, so there is no chance of my seeing her. I may as well make a short visit, and I shall have the more time for writing."

"You have heard, I suppose, my dear Mrs. Grey," said she, "that some new friends are to be established this week at Chatterton—Mr. and Mrs. Foley, and their family. Charming people, I hear.—She was Lord Gleddon's daughter. A sweet woman! My sad health will scarcely permit me to make their acquaintance. I am nearly cut out from society, you know; but Anne and your dear Sophy will, I am certain, be as good to me as they always are. You will call on the family, of course, when they come, and then you will think of me, and bring me any little amusement in your power. It is always interesting to hear the conversation of new people. Oh! I am so fatigued!"

"Try this chair, Lady Downton," said William, with the broadest, bluntest, most healthy tone, properly got up for the occasion. "You would be rested directly. Whenever I am tired with a long day's shooting, I try this chair, and it always rests me sooner than anything."

"Ah!" said poor Lady Downton, trying not to show that she was mortified, "I know it is impossible for those in rude health to understand our feelings. Thank you, thank you. You are very kind, but pray sit down again. Indeed I must be going soon. You were staying at a pleasant house in the autumn, Mr. Grey."

I heard of you from a friend of mine who was there. You know her—Mrs. Acton.”

“Yes,” said William.

“She is a great friend of the Grahams’ too, you know,” continued she.

“Yes,” said William again, re-seating himself.

“You have heard, of course,” continued Lady Downton, “that Jane Graham is going to be married?”

“No, by Jove,” said William, starting up.

The insulting offer of the arm-chair was revenged.

“Jane Graham going to be married! I don’t believe a word of it!” Then recollecting himself, and sinking back again in the arm-chair, he thought, “What a fool I am to expose myself to the greatest tale-bearer in the kingdom!”

“I make a rule never to believe anything I hear, you know, Lady Downton,” said he, with his most good-humoured, civil, and gentle manner. “I forget, did you say who it was to?”

“No, I did not, for indeed I hardly know whether it would be justifiable, as I heard it from one who is a friend of the family. However, there is no harm in saying before friends, and you too, Mr. Grey, are also a friend of the family! It is Sir Frederic Norton. But I really am paying you an unconscionable visit. May I trouble you, Mr. Grey?” and William rung the bell, and pulled it so violently that the spring never recovered it, and the bell-hanger was sent for the next day.

“My carriage, if you please.” Joyful sound! and then came the ‘good-byes,’ and the “do tell your dear sister to come over and see me, very soon; and you must come, and if Miss Daventry would like the walk, and to see Westhorpe—I should be most happy—She need not be afraid of not being quite quiet. Good-bye, my love to Sophy;” and then, when fairly out of the room, William’s indignation burst forth.

“An odious, malicious, scandal-bearing woman! I don’t believe a word she says, after all; though sometimes she may hit on the truth—but I don’t believe it!” walking and half talking to himself. “She came, you know, just to ferret out all the news she could about Charlotte Daventry. I am heartily glad you were both so unsatisfactory, and that the girl was out! That, and your

spirit of reserve, were happy accidents. Odious woman !” and William strode out of the room, but soon strode in again, with a glove dangling in his hand.

“ Oh ! by the way, Anne, I wish to goodness, you would mend this glove for me. I have not had a glove I can wear, for the last month ! and as to Watson or Hickman doing anything for one, or doing anything, indeed, that they ought to do, it is out of the question. Where all my gloves are gone I cannot think ! — — — Make haste ! Why, what a time a glove takes mending ! I could have done it myself in half the time. I would not have asked you, if I thought I should have been kept waiting here all this time !” William was not in the best of humours : but we will hope that a long walk, with a holeless glove on his hand, neatly mended by the small and nimble fingers of his sister Anne, would help to restore him to his usual equanimity.

CHAPTER XI.

WE will leave William Grey to drive away his ill-humour as best he might ; that we may relate a part of the conversation which took place between Sophy and her cousin, in that ill-fated walk which deprived Lady Dowton of the inestimable advantage of being the first to judge whether Miss Daventry were a beauty or not.

“ How I delight in a good long walk,” said Sophy, in setting off with the determination to take one, and to walk steadily and perseveringly to the end of it. “ One is so apt to feel stupid if one sits at work, or at reading, or drawing for a whole morning, without a walk to refresh one’s intellects.”

“ Yes, very apt,” said Charlotte. “ But then I have more occasion for it than you, because you know I do not draw, or play, or do all those delightful things which you and Anne do. At least, though I play and draw a little, it is so ill, that it gives me no pleasure. Not that I thought so much of it before I came here, and

learnt how much better people could play and draw than I could. ”

“ Oh ! I dare say in a little time, ” said Sophy, stepping on briskly and *con spirito*, for she was not displeased at hearing her own praises, “ you will perform in both ways quite as well as Anne and I. ”

“ Oh ! do you think so ? ” said Charlotte, in an animated tone, and looking towards Sophy’s self-satisfied face,—“ Do you think I ever could ? I should so like it ! I do sometimes so very much wish that I was a little more like you—and Anne, ” added she, as if it were an after thought, added because it was proper to do so.

“ I have not the least doubt about it, Charlotte, ” said Sophy, still walking *con spirito*, but with a more stately air, and a smile widening the line of bright red lip, and displaying the pearly row of teeth within,—lighting up the bright blue eyes, and touching even the small well-formed nose with a spirituality—an expression—to which noses are not commonly allowed to lay any claim, even in a novel, and which nothing but a little delicate flattery could have imparted.

However, Sophy Grey’s eyes, nose, and mouth did, one or all of them, separately or conjointly, give an expression of serene self-complacency as she stepped lightly along with Charlotte Daventry at her side.

Charlotte saw it. She looked once when Sophy was not regarding her, and a smile illumined the peculiar depths of those dark, searching eyes. The glance was quickly withdrawn, the face grave again, and the eyes quiet.

“ You are so good-natured about me, ” said she, “ I cannot say how much I feel it—how often I think of it ! It seems so strange that you should take any notice of me. I never thought when I came, and first saw you—when I looked round the room and saw how nice you looked ! so different to what I knew that I was—I never thought you would be with me as you are, and that I should learn not to be so much frightened at you. I told you once before, how beautiful I thought you, and how I picked you out from all the party to be the one to be frightened at, because I thought you looked so superior to all ; and now, indeed, I do not know why I am less alarmed, for I think you much superior to what I did then—to what I could do before I knew more of you ; ” she paused a moment, “ and do you really think that I shall ever grow at all like you ? ”

“Why, I dare say you will, if you mean as to drawing and music, as soon as you like : you will know quite as much of it as we do, and I dare say will surpass us. But remember, Charlotte,” said she, laughing, “I shall not endure that. I shall not like you to do anything better than I can myself! My vanity will not bear that at all!”

“Ah! you are so droll and nice,” said Charlotte, looking at her with such a pleased expression. “Do you know, I am going to make a confession, Sophy, though I don’t know whether I should, and yet there is no harm, because I know you will not repeat it, and I really could not help what I am going to confess. If I am very wrong, perhaps you will tell me, and I will try to change if I can. It is your good-nature, and something so attractive and dear in your manner that, perhaps, makes me speak to you differently to what I should to others, and what I have to tell is— you will not be angry?”

“No, certainly,” said Sophy.

“Well, what I have to tell is, that somehow—I do feel to like you better than—you will not be angry, shall you?”

“Oh, no, foolish girl to think I should,” said Sophy, eagerly, yet caressingly.

“I do feel, somehow, I like you better than Anne. I tried to like her as well, and she is so kind, and it seems so ungrateful!—but still I do like you the best, though I try not!—but I do love you so much—but I am sure you are angry? You must think me so wicked!” said she eagerly, to Sophy.

“No, indeed,” was her reply. “I do not think you wrong, and, indeed, I ought to be too much flattered to feel it wrong if it really were,” continued she, laughing. “But I do not see anything so very wrong in it, especially as you cannot help it; and there is no harm in your telling me your feeling : you may be sure that I shall not repeat it again. As to not liking Anne the best, at present, she is so much more reserved than I am, so much more serious, perhaps, that you were not likely to do so quite as soon. You will be quite sure to like her as much and more than you do me, when you know more of us.” Charlotte did not answer directly, nor say she thought it probable. Perhaps she did not feel that it was likely, and therefore did not wish to hurt the sisterly feelings of Sophy by expressing her thoughts.

After a short pause, she said, that she was glad Sophy had not thought her very wrong, and that she was relieved by having told her, for she did not know whether it would be right or not to speak on such a subject; and then, as they walked on, Sophy felt that Charlotte Daventry was an uncommonly nice, open-hearted girl. “She is very simple and childish,” thought she, “but she is such a good creature!” Who does not know what ‘a good creature’ means? That being so exceedingly flattering and useful to ourselves, who never interferes, but always adds to our pleasures if she can; sacrificing self to our interests; and for all her favours never laying us under any obligations!

It is a charming character, and happy are those who happen to enumerate a good creature amongst their relations, friends, or dependants! “She is amusing,” thought Sophy, “and we are very fortunate in having such a companion, when she might have been so disagreeable!”

It will be supposed that Lady Dowton’s was not the only visit to the Greys. Visitor, after visitor, succeeded, and Sophy began to think it was rather pleasant to have been forced into retirement for a short time, for the sake of the welcome contrast.

In all the numerous visits many agreeable things were said and listened to. Sophy was, sometimes, told that she was going to marry Lord Stoketon—sometimes laughed at for keeping it so secret. Sometimes told, less openly, that “she had been heard of”—that there were various little rumours about a certain gentleman—that his name began with an S—, but that he had sisters whose name began with a different letter—was asked when it would be?—was told that she ought to pity poor Captain Herbert—was called a cruel girl—was asked after Mr. Temple—was told that he had been known to say, that he thought Miss Grey a charming person! and he never had been known to say so of any girl before—What could be more pleasant than to hear all this?

When her flattering friends were gone, she began to think whether Mr. Temple had not seemed to admire her. It had not exactly struck her before; but then, she had been a good deal occupied with Lord Stoketon; she thought, upon reflection, that he must have been an admirer. It was very evident, and she only wished that she had given him a little more encouragement.

Anne was present at all these attacks on Sophy, and she sat quietly by without receiving her share. Her visitors did not know that she had been seated on the barouche-box with one of their heroes ! She heard Sophy accused of having captivated Edward Temple, and her heart had beat quicker than usual, and the colour mounted to her face, as if (foolish girl as she thought herself) it had been she and not Sophy, who had been guilty of such a thing.

Her heart beat still quicker as she heard what he had said of her sister. “ How stupid I must have been never to have perceived his admiration ! ” thought she, and she felt very quiet, and steady, and a something rather heavy and cold about her heart.

She remembered that he had certainly seemed to admire Sophy at first, and one day she had caught him attentively observing them both as they stood together, and their mutual book of drawings was being looked at. He had come up to the place where they stood, and she had been so nervous that she had turned away her head just as he approached. He had spoken to Sophy. He had evidently come from the other side of the room to speak to her, but Lord Stoketon had attracted her attention at the time, which made her apparently uncivil to him, and he had walked back again.

She saw, on thinking it over, that he had probably admired Sophy, and this accounted at once for his good-nature to herself. She felt satisfied, but yet, not quite so much pleased as she ought to have been ; she could not think why till she remembered poor Lord Stoketon. She saw that he had very little chance of securing Sophy’s affections, if Edward Temple was his rival. It was impossible that there could be a moment’s hesitation in any one’s mind between the two. There was not another person in England, she thought, who could have any chance against Mr. Temple.

Amongst the many visits to the Greys, which curiosity prompted on Charlotte Daventry’s account, one common topic had been regularly discussed. A new family had arrived at Chatterton.

Lady Dowton had, for once, hit on the truth, and Chatterton had become the residence of a family of the name of Foley. It had long been untenanted. It was a large and good house, and it had gone to the hearts of all the individuals composing this good neighbourhood to see it year by year unoccupied, and all its powers wasted on the rats and mice, which, as it was averred, had there

taken up their abode long before the period when mothers and fathers and daughters had given up hoping it would be inhabited by some more desirable occupants ; long before the time when mothers had ceased to imagine the rich unmarried heir there domiciled to fall in love with one of their numerous daughters ; long before fathers had given up the hope of there finding a congenial soul who should talk with them on the danger of the nation, be an active magistrate, and religiously preserve game for his neighbours' shooting ; long before daughters had relinquished the hope of finding at Chatterton a bosom friend, a girl with dark eyes, and long sentimental ringlets, and a brother not unlike his sister, poor, pale, and interesting ; or, as the more mercenary had anticipated, rich, gay, and captivating.

But still rats and mice alone resided at Chatterton under the superintendence of one old woman—a cross witch-like looking being, of whom it was asserted in the village that she was possessed of that superfluous luxury, a familiar spirit. Rats and mice prospered under her government : they encreased, and grew in number and boldness, and at last threatened to mutiny and turn out their sovereign, the witch-like old woman, who declared she could live there no longer ; and Chatterton was in danger of being deserted by all, save the rats and mice.

Mr. Foley saved it from this danger, by taking it from its owner, Mr. Aston, and coming with his family there to reside. Rats and mice soon disappeared, cheerfulness and comforts appeared in their place, and Mr. and Mrs. Foley, their son and daughter, gave the neighbourhood subject for conversation for a year to come.

Curiosity had been divided between them and Charlotte Daventry. Two such events had never before occurred in any country neighbourhood—a new family at a house long untenanted, and a grown up orphan who might be an heiress, introduced into a long-established family !

All who have lived in a quiet country neighbourhood will understand the delight of such a concurrence of events ; but happy those who, like Anne Grey, needed no such events to drive away the ennui of a quiet country life, and who, with her, have no ennui to drive away.

Anne needed no excitement—no wound-up curiosity to render

her contented and cheerful. In her home employments—in her pursuits—her duties, she found full occupation, and she experienced the happiness which flows from well-spent time, and a well-regulated and cultivated mind.

But there were many who were not sorry for the excitement of Chatterton and an orphan girl, and even Sophy and Mrs. Grey were not uninfected by it.

Sophy loved gossip, and in spite of the reproofs of her father and the reflected light of her mother's lectures, she too frequently indulged in this fault. A lively disposition and the absence of very sound sense led her on to circulate the ill-natured reports which she repeated only because they were ludicrous, and her laugh might be heard as she made others laugh at a successful story. Perhaps her fault is common to all young ladies above and below the age of twenty, who possess a little vanity, not much sense, and a very small turn for humour.

Sophy could not be perfectly happy till one fortunate morning the carriage stood at the door, Mrs. Grey, Anne and herself equipped—the horses impatient—the coachman patient—*all* ready, and off they set to pay their respects to Mr., Mrs., and Miss Foley, at Chatterton.

And now will they be at home? “I am sure not,” said Sophy. “When one wishes people to be so, they never are? What do you say, Anne?”

“Let me see the look of the servants as they open the door,” said Anne, “and I will tell you. I always know by the way they receive the interesting question.”

“Ah! you know I suppose perfectly by the time you hear the answer?” said Sophy.

“No, mine is really fair dealing,” said Anne, laughing, “it is an instinctive power of reading thoughts before they are uttered.”

“Well, that is very curious,” said Mrs. Grey, who had not been listening very attentively, but heard the possession of some new accomplishment claimed by her daughter. “That is very curious and useful, I dare say. Who taught you, my dear?”

“Shyness, I believe, mama,” said Anne. “Shyness is an excellent instructor sometimes.”

The carriage was going over a rough part of the road, and it was not very easy to hear.

“ Oh ! Sir S—! Sir Samuel, I suppose—I don’t know him ! ” half muttered Mrs. Grey ; but Anne did not hear, for the carriage was still making its way over the newly gravelled road.

“ Some partner of hers, ” thought Mrs. Grey. “ Here we are at the lodge, ” said she. “ I wonder whether they will be at home. ”

They were at home, and in another minute, Mrs. and the two Miss Greys were ushered into the drawing room at Chatterton.

CHAPTER XII.

WE have introduced the Greys into the Chatterton drawing-room. There they found three individuals—one a middle-aged woman, who must, they thought, be Mrs. Foley—another a young and pleasing looking girl, whom they no less shrewdly guessed to be Miss Foley, and a third, a tall dark-haired young man, whom they as wisely determined to be Mr. Foley, junior.

On their entrance the trio rose, the middle-aged lady courtseyed in return to Mrs. Grey’s courtsey, and then sat down again as if she knew nothing about them. The young lady said something civil to all the party, which Mrs. Grey, intent on the civility due to Mrs. Foley, did not hear, and was only forced into attention by the pointed offer of a seat, and the two Miss Greys and Mrs. Grey being seated, there was a silence.

The middle-aged lady went on with her knitting, and seemed not to think she had anything else to do. Mrs. Grey thought she must devote herself to her, and wondered how it would be best to begin the conversation. The young lady seemed bent on speaking to Mrs. Grey, Mrs. Grey appeared as obstinately bent on not considering her the person to whom she ought to attend. The tall young man sat in the farther corner of the room, lounging in an arm-chair, apparently thinking he had no occasion to talk.

Anne was growing dreadfully shy, and felt as if her life depen-

ded on the awful silence being broken, but yet had not courage to utter the first word. What could she say? the day was neither fine nor the reverse, and nothing but the weather occurred to her mind. Sophy sat, not feeling shy, but with a strong inclination to laugh. Had the silence lasted a second more, nothing would have saved her, especially as she saw the young man in the arm-chair opposite with his mouth curling, and his eyes twinkling with the same merry propensity!

At this instant the young lady gave up the hope of attracting Mrs. Grey's attention, and turned towards Sophy, with a blush on her face, which passed for a remark, though none was uttered. Thoughts of "Deaf and Dumb asylums," rushed on Sophy's mind. But the hint was taken. Sophy gave her attention, the laugh that had just begun to sparkle in her eyes, and dimple her mouth, was checked, she determined to make a bold effort to speak, and said something in praise of the weather. The young lady assented, and the unlucky rain pattered heavily on the window, to declare at that moment in audible tones that neither Miss Grey nor Miss Foley had spoken the truth. However the spell was broken: even the rain gave a subject for conversation, and Mrs. Grey, hearing the sound of voices, ventured on a remark to the elderly lady, who contentedly continued her knitting.

"Beautiful place!" said Mrs. Grey.

"Yes, beautiful," said the lady, looking rather surprised at being addressed.

"I never saw it look so well," said Mrs. Grey, very civilly.

"Indeed!" responded the lady.

"I hope you like it?" continued Mrs. Grey.

The lady looked up—stared—and answered, "Certainly."

"What!" thought Mrs. Grey, "she thinks I ought to know that Mr. Foley would not have taken it without her approval!"

"I hope you like the neighbourhood?" said Mrs. Grey again.

The middle-aged lady was puzzled—that was a home question, and as Mrs. Grey got only a sort of 'hem' for an answer, she tried still nearer home, and said:—

"I hope Mr. Foley is well?"

"Mr. and Mrs. Foley are gone this morning to Hadley," was the reply.

“ I beg your pardon,” said poor Mrs. Grey, who actually blushed at her mistake : the secret was out, and this was not Mrs. Foley, probably a visitor, and though Mrs. Grey knew why she ought to beg pardon, she forgot that the middle-aged woman might not ; but Mrs. Grey determined to retrieve her error, and turned to the young lady, whom she was shocked to think she had so long neglected, and resolving to be on the safe side, said :—

“ Miss Foley, I presume ? ”

Miss Foley bowed and half smiled, and Mrs. Grey now feeling on safe ground, said, laughing a little, “ It is really so awkward to introduce oneself ; I hope you will excuse my blunders. I believed Mrs. Foley was in the room,” and then followed several civil speeches, and Mrs. Grey, looking complimentary towards the young man in the arm-chair, said :—

“ Your brother, I presume, Miss Foley ? ” and the reply that it was her cousin called for another apology from Mrs. Grey.—

Soon after, the parting words were uttered, and an introduction having taken place between the middle-aged woman and the Greys, by which they ascertained her name was Smith, Mrs. and the two Miss Greys walked out of the room—got into the carriage, and there might have been heard the long-suppressed laughter of Sophy Grey, and the accordant merriment of Anne, and then in the drawing-room at Chatterton might have been heard the same merry sounds from Miss Foley and her cousin, as the carriage drove off.

“ Foley or anti Foley ? ” interrogated William Grey, as his mother and sisters entered the room on their return from Chatterton ; and Sophy gave a laughing relation of the scene.

“ Excellent ! ” said William, “ by Jove ! what would I not have given to have been there ! and so, ma’am,” turning to his mother who was unshawling, and had not been attending, “ you told Mrs. *what’s her name*, the humble friend, that you hoped she found Mrs. Foley’s house comfortable, and I suppose she assured you it was ? ”

“ No, indeed,” said Mrs. Grey, “ she did not say so. I thought she seemed not to think it so very ”—

“ Oh ! toady,” said William, laughing. “ So you tell tales out of school do you ? and what is Miss Foley, Sophy ? Has she any beauty ? Has she any ideas in her head, do you think, beyond a fine or rainy day ? ”

“Oh yes! and she is very pretty; I should like to see you in love, William, just for once!” a cloud came across William’s brow, which she did not perceive; “and Miss Foley will do admirably for you—it would be such a novelty, and so amusing!”

“What nonsense girls talk and think!” said William, in a voice which showed he was not in the best of tempers, and did not take Sophy’s plan as it was meant. “They never can talk five minutes but they must bring in love. I wish, Sophy, you would learn at least not to let all the world see upon what your thoughts are running!”

William walked to the other end of the room, with an indignant air.

“What a bad humour William is in!” said Sophy, in not a low voice to Anne—Anne did not answer. Sophy felt convinced that eldest brothers required a great deal of patience and forbearance, and, walking out of the room, she hummed the air of an Italian song, which Captain Herbert had given her. *He* was a younger brother!

Anne also left the drawing-room, and proceeded to Charlotte Davenport’s room. As she opened the door, she saw her cousin busily engaged in looking over papers, and she hesitated to enter.

“Oh! come in, Anne,” said she, “you will not interrupt me. Indeed, now we are alone, I wished to show you something. I feel sure you will understand my feelings. I am often very wretched,” continued she, leaning her head upon her hands as she sat on the sofa, on which Anne had also seated herself; “but I do not wish to show it. I cannot speak of it when I see all around me gay, and happy, and thoughtless. They are all very kind to me, but with you I feel that I am understood. I fancy that you can enter into my feelings,” and the tears which fell from between her fingers showed what those feelings must be.

“Yes, indeed, dear Charlotte,” said Anne, affectionately taking her hand, “I do feel for you!” and the tears stood in her eyes as she spoke. “I have often felt for you! But I hoped as you seemed more cheerful of late, that you had begun to feel your affliction less bitterly. I am sorry indeed if it is not so!”

“Aye, I thought I should deceive by my manner. I wished to deceive *them* into thinking me happy, and forgetful, and hard-hearted, and I knew that I could. All are not so quick—all have

not feelings—somehow—you understand, perhaps—” She hesitated as though she scarcely liked to explain. “ You know some people have not by nature the same feelings as others—but I do not know what I am saying—they are all so kind—too kind to me ! ” she heaved a deep sigh, and Anne saw that she must be thinking of her father’s character, as a reason why she should not deserve kindness, and she loved her for this delicacy of feeling.

“ I often think that you understand me, ” said Charlotte. “ I sometimes see that others do not understand your feelings, and I have wished very much that I might speak to you, and tell you that I, at least, though I am so foolish and ignorant, could comprehend you, and that I might tell you of my own ; and yet it is not kind to talk to you so : it must distress you. ”

“ No, ” said Anne, very kindly ; “ though it distresses me to see you suffer, yet it distresses me less to be told of it by you, than to think you were keeping your grief to yourself ; it must increase, if brooded over without the consolation of imparting your feelings to others. It is a very amiable feeling which has actuated your concealment, dear Charlotte ; and I cannot but love you the more for such a proof of self-control. ”

As Anne uttered the last word Charlotte half withdrew, with a convulsive shudder, the hand which Anne affectionately held in hers. “ I see, ” continued Anne, “ what fortitude you have exercised from the emotion it causes you even to allude to your praiseworthy efforts ; but, dear Charlotte, do not over-exert yourself. Be sure that I shall understand you, and be always ready to listen to the utterance of your grief. You are mistaken if you think that any of us do not feel for you ; but all, perhaps, do not show it so much, and all may not be equally quick in perceiving, through a gay and smiling face, the sorrow which lies beneath. They would pity if they knew that pity was required. I can feel, ” said Anne, whilst the tear trembled in her eye, “ how impossible it would be soon to forget those whom we have loved. As yet I have not been tried ; but when I look around me, on all on whom I depend for affection, I feel what it would be to lose even one out of the number. I feel what it must be to love but one, and to lose that one. I can truly feel for you ! ” Her voice faltered as she uttered the last words, and the tears fell fast, whilst the sobs of the orphan girl were heard, as

the soft affectionate voice of Anne had ceased, and the two cousins wept together; the one with the heart-breaking sense of desolation of the brotherless and sisterless orphan; the other with the less selfish feeling of overpowering sympathy in her sorrow.

Anne was the first to utter. She spoke in soothing tones; and Charlotte became composed as she spoke, though for awhile she made no answer to the kind words which fell from the lips of Anne. At length she expressed her sense of relief, at the assurance of Anne's sympathy, and also the knowledge that she would understand her feelings. She then said that she had called Anne into the room for the purpose of showing her a miniature of her father.

"I felt that I could show it to you," said she. "Do not open it here. I am weak and foolish, and I do not wish to make you cry for me again;" she tried to smile. "But take it to your own room. It is like—very like!—You will not show it to any one, but look at it yourself, and try," her voice faltered, "to think with kindness of," she hesitated, "of *him*;" she added in a low voice, and Anne saw her emotion, and left the room with the miniature in her hand.

She was much overcome with this little scene. She had scarcely expected such from her cousin. It was true she had occasionally remarked tokens of strong feeling, which displayed themselves involuntarily, and were instantly checked; but Charlotte had generally seemed gay and cheerful. She felt that she must rather have under-rated her character. There was, at times, something so childish in her manner, that Anne had believed her incapable of strong feeling. She was still an enigma to her, for though her feelings had, perhaps, not been very well expressed in this interview, still they showed, both in their existence and in their concealment, such ardour, and strength of mind, and character, that the mode of expression could not diminish her astonishment and admiration at their knowledge.

When Anne opened the case which contained the miniature she was surprised, and not, perhaps, agreeably, in seeing the strong resemblance which it bore to her cousin. There were the dark peculiar eyes, and the expression in the mouth which at times was so remarkable in Charlotte.

Anne sighed, and wished she had been less like her father in appearance, "and yet, what," thought she, "signify externals,

unlike as she is in all that is of real importance? Poor girl! how can I love and pity her enough?" and she closed the case which held the miniature.

CHAPTER XIII.

A FEW days after the Greys' first visit to Chatterton, Mr., Mrs., and Miss Foley were ushered into the drawing-room at Weston.

Now, though I have a plot in my head, it is a peaceable plot, and Mrs. Grey, if she had heard it would hardly have started, or thought of Gunpowder Treason. Still there is a plot, and it is either for or against the peace of William Grey, and Miss Foley. *For or against*, I leave to the decision of any one who has ever been in love.

William Grey, as may have been perceived, had admired Jane Graham, but Lady Downton assured him that she was going to be married to another. William Grey was not a man to be inconsolable. Miss Foley was pretty, and what is called, "an uncommonly nice girl," and William Grey can do no less than fall in love with her. He must, then, become a hero, and he must open the door soon after their arrival at Weston, and as he enters, and makes one, two, or three, large heavy strides towards Mr. and Mrs. Foley, for the purpose of saying, "how do you do," Miss Foley must discover him to be strikingly handsome, very gentlemanlike, and the very beau-ideal of what a lover should be!

If I do not describe Mr. and Mrs. Foley, no one will know anything about them, and if I do, am I sure that they will know a great deal more? We must imagine them seated, and that Mrs. Grey had uttered something very civil, for she remembered that, as new neighbours, they were the lions and lionesses of the day.

Mr. Foley was looking and hoping for something better than Mrs. Grey, (poor woman!) upon whom to expend his agreeableness, and Mrs. Foley, sinking in languid inertness upon the sofa, uttered common-places in a feeble, heart-rending voice.

Mr. Foley ! If I prized him as highly as he prized himself, I should desire the publisher to put those two words in letters of gold. They are precious ones—not in themselves—no ! there may be a hundred Mr. Foleys to come, and there may have been a hundred Mr. Foleys come and gone, who had the self-same words attached to them, and yet were nothing ; but it is he himself, who gave a value to those two words. Those two small words are the embodiment, and stand for the intimation of this man's being—of this very Mr. Foley, who, if his name had unluckily chanced to be Jones, or Smith, or Higginbottom, would have given a lustre to the name, and still have made us desire that it should stand alone in the book, Jones, Smith, or Higginbottom, each letter a golden one.

Mr. Foley thought himself more accomplished, more talented—(that is not an orthodox word, but it is useful)—more capable of succeeding in all he attempted than any other man in England, and if he did not quite succeed in persuading every one else to think so, he cared but little for the ignorant and envious few who denied his superior powers.

Mr. Foley was proud of himself—proud of his wife, because she was *his* wife ; proud of his son for the same reason ; proud of his daughter for ditto ; proud of his house now it was his (he had been proud of his other house, though he had left it because the wind blew in so cold—the prospect from the windows was so bleak and dull, and the aspect so due north). He was proud of Chatterton—proud of the neighbourhood—proud of everything to which, in speaking of it, he could append that small, sweetly-toned monosyllable ‘ my.’

Mr. Foley, when I die, will you grant me one favour ? Will you let my epitaph be written by your hand ? Let yours be the pen to depict my character, for remember I am *your* novelist ; then I know my epitaph will be my eulogy.

Mrs. Foley was a tall, sickly, not in-elegant looking woman—gifted with delicate health, and with so much sensibility as to render her health a little worse than it really was. She was a very good, amiable woman, with small abilities, small feet and hands, a small delicate looking face, and a small voice ; — an excellent wife and mother, and daughter, and sister and cousin. She had a large

heart, and it took in all her relations to the hundredth cousin, and farther still, if any one farther had liked to claim it. She loved them all in regular degrees : she had kind feelings and pity for the fifty times removed cousins ; sighs and ‘ poor things,’ to give on the death of the twenty times removed ; sighs, ‘ poor things,’ and a few tears on that of the ten times distant ; a diminution of sleep for the five times ; and a positive flow of tears and loss of sleep and appetite on the demise of the second cousins once removed. For first cousins, aunts, and uncles, she had a whole world of heart and affection, and for her husband and children there was more than a whole devoted heart—there were sighs and fears, and alarms each day, and tears for every look bestowed on them !

She had lost one daughter, and ever since that melancholy event, Mrs. Foley had thought that she might lose another—that she might lose her husband or her son ; she never looked at them but she thought of this,—the tears always filled her eyes as she did so ; and Mr. Foley thought “ she is my wife. This is charming sensibility.”

But William Grey is waiting all this time to come on the stage—so here is his cue — “ charming sensibility,” and William entered. Mrs. Grey introduced him as her son, and he sat down by Miss Foley. Perhaps few would believe that William Grey could be very agreeable, yet so it was. There was a degree of blunt humour, originality, shrewdness and cleverness, joined to an open-hearted frankness that made him very agreeable when he chose to be so ; and Miss Foley felt no doubt of his powers as she drove back to Chatterton that morning.

William thought her a very pretty specimen of a young lady, and with less nonsense about her than most girls—but alas for Miss Foley—his heart was still with Jane Graham.

I have often moralized (for writers of novels do moralize sometimes) on the perverse distribution of human events and human gifts. I have often thought what a pity it is that to the poor half-starved beggar cannot be given a little of the superfluous wealth that comes showering in upon the rich. I have often looked on the world at large with the eye of a moralizer, and seen the good and bad things of life scattered about as though at random ; I have seen the rich as it were attracting riches which they did not want ; the

poor as it were attracting the poverty which threatened to overwhelm them. I have seen the dowerless girl, deprived also of beauty, talents, and education; the splendid heiress loaded with the superfluous gifts of beauty, accomplishments, and sense: I have seen the broken-down and afflicted, with afflictions still showered upon them—the gay, the proud, and the unfeeling, with fresh pleasures and enjoyments bestowed each day. I have seen the child who, in days of fête, has received one gay and glittering toy, overwhelmed with gay and glittering toys all coming on her the rich and fortunate; and I have seen the poor forlorn child whose grandfather or grandmother have forgotten to make the birthday or the Christmas present, alike deserted by all—no glittering toy is hers! Had one out of the many, heaped on the fortunate child, been spared to her, how happy would it have made her—how much better had it been! But it is ever thus—tears to the needless stream—riches to the rich—poverty to the poor—the heart of William Grey to the girl who had already won a heart, and no heart of William Grey to poor Miss Foley, who had no heart to call her own.

CHAPTER XIV.

CHARLOTTE Daventry seemed happy and cheerful,—she went out with her cousins, and was charmed with Lady Dowton, who was charmed with her. She struck up a friendship with Miss Foley and with one of the Miss Dashwoods, and seemed none the sadder for the very strong feelings she sometimes displayed to Anne Grey. It is very true, that except in romantic novels, there is no such thing as keeping up a sentiment for life. People, let them be as miserable, and romantically disconsolate as they may, will have their moments of tolerable happiness. They are not always screwed up to a sigh-and-groan pitch, but descend every now and then to eat, laugh, and be merry; and so it seemed with Charlotte Daventry—but we will not judge her severely.

Mrs. Grey was beginning to despair of any invitations coming to Weston, and of ever being able to marry either of her daughters, or poor Charlotte Daventry, to whom, in the goodness of her heart, she extended her benevolent wish that she should be married and got out of the house.

After all, when a good affectionate mother talks of the pleasure of seeing her daughters married, what is it but talking of the pleasure of losing their society?—of losing the companion, the friend perhaps (for mothers do make friends of their daughters), the joy, the gladness of the house? But mothers are so unselfish! and Mrs. Grey, good woman! never wished so heartily for anything in her life (except sometimes that Mr. Grey would be in time for his dinner), as she did for her daughters to marry, and her niece too, now she had one living with her.

“My dear,” said she to Mr. Grey, when Mr. Grey felt a perverse inclination not to let his wife and daughters go to a ball; “My dear, you know what an object it is that the girls should be seen and known. How are they ever to marry if they are not? It is of the greatest consequence. I always feel that from experience. You know, Mr. Grey, how I was shut up.”

“Yes, my dear,” said Mr. Grey, with a smile, “and you see how it has turned out.”

“Now you are very tiresome, Mr. Grey,” said she, though she could not feel very cross just then.

Still she was unhappy in the absence of invitations, and nothing consoled her but the frequent sight of Mrs. Dodson and her son.

Some little time ago, I called Robert Dodson like his mother, but Robert Dodson was now very much improved. He did not shuffle his feet when in company—did not blush very much, his exterior was tolerably gentlemanlike, and his mind had been improved by a little collision with the world—that many in one, that one in many, which is said to do so much harm, and so much good—to be so dangerous, so useful, so deceitful, and so desirable!

The world had certainly done Robert Dodson good. It had diminished the vulgarity of both his mind and appearance, and he had turned out not at all what the novelist would expect from a man whose father had made his money by trade. He had sense and taste

enough to prefer his cousins the Greys to Mrs. Dodson's vulgar and illiterate relations and friends. Mrs. Grey was very fond of him, and called him "a very superior young man." We will not pretend to say what her ideas of superiority were, or to whom he was supposed to be superior! Mr. Grey liked him, because he thought him good-hearted, and not very deficient in sense.

Sophy and Anne both liked him—He was so good-humoured, and after all, not so very stupid; so they were never sorry when cousin Robert called, in the morning, and looked at their drawings (sometimes the wrong way upwards, to be sure), for he always thought them beautiful, and he listened to their music, and really liked Anne's singing, when it was not Italian.

And Charlotte Daventry, did not she like him? Oh certainly! and in the innocence of her heart, good simple girl, she thought he must be very charming, because he was cousin to the Greys—She liked him very much, and thought he ought to marry one of her cousins. These opinions were expressed to Mrs. Grey alone. Good girl! She always found out what people wished to hear, and it was the more amiable in this case, as she did laugh at cousin Bob a little before her cousins, and was quite aware of his deficiencies. As Mrs. Grey reflected on what Charlotte had said, and indulged in the hope that Anne might meet with another Lord Stoketon, she sometimes said to herself, "If both Sophy and Anne marry noblemen, there is no reason why Charlotte should not marry Robert Dodson."

A rumour of Lord Stoketon's attentions to Sophy had reached Mrs. Dodson, but, like a sensible woman, she never attended to rumours which she wished not to be true, and Sophy continued in her mind as the future Mrs. Dodson. But in spite of hints, inuendos, and broader jokes, Sophy was not such in the mind of her son Robert. Robert Dodson, though less hard and unsusceptible than most men, whose mothers wish them to marry, was yet perverse enough to make his own choice, and instead of fixing on the sister Mrs. Dodson intended, he chose for himself, and fell in love with Anne.

Robert Dodson had not much quickness, but he saw that Anne was always kind and considerate. He was not afraid of her laughing at him, and time was when Sophy had done so. Sophy would

be very good-natured when there was no one present but her cousin Robert; but on other occasions, vanity, or her love of ridicule, interfered with her good-nature.

Anne never changed; and even Robert Dodson discovered that she was superior in intellect to her sister, and he began to forget that Sophy was pretty, though he had always heard she was so; but he began to feel that Anne was lovely, and that there was nothing which gave him such a decided impression of happiness as sitting in the small morning room at Weston, with his eyes fixed on Anne Grey, and his ears taking in the sound of her sweet voice as she sung. Still Anne knew nothing of it.

Charlotte Daventry was likewise a favourite of Robert Dodson's, for she was very kind to him, and if Sophy and Anne were out of the room (and no one could tell how it was, but he and Charlotte had several *tête-à-tête* together), she always talked to him of Anne, and there was that in her manner of doing so which sent him home a very happy man, with a self-satisfied feeling, and a kind of vague idea that Anne Grey was not so far from returning his love as he had supposed.

How truly amiable, and good-natured, and complying, Charlotte Daventry must have been, for there was not an individual in that family, and scarce an individual out of it, who did not feel a liking towards her, and experience a secret and flattering conviction that they had been singled out to be the object of her peculiar confidence, affection, admiration, or respect!

And yet, why was there so often a dissatisfied, or an excited feeling, when the private conversation was over? Why did human nature appear so faulty, or human life at times so enchanting? Why did suspicion flash across the mind—why did vanity rise and flutter into pride—why did it turn with contempt, and peevish dissatisfaction to the homage which before had satisfied its aspirations? Why did even the most gentle, the most loving and affectionate of beings, turn away at times from those conversations, with a sense that there might be some in the world who could understand and appreciate her better than the father and mother, and brother and sister, she had hitherto regarded with unmixed affection? and why did she, still more often and more sadly, feel that she herself was perhaps unworthy of their undivided love?

The hint was given :—it was by accident, certainly, for it came from Charlotte Daventry—yet a hint was given, that *none* in that family circle, to whom all the ardour, and steadiness of her own affection was given, loved her, as she *ought* to be loved ! Anne felt it might be so—it might be that she was not loved as the others were—she did not use the word as she *ought* to be loved : no, she was loved as much as she deserved :—more—much more perhaps ; but still, not perhaps, as she had once imagined.

“ How little idea has Charlotte, ” thought she, one day, “ that those trifling things which she imagines mean nothing should have such an effect upon me ! She is a dear good girl, but somehow, ” sighed Anne, “ I could almost wish she had never come amongst us ! I do not know why, but we have not gone on the same together since ; and yet it is not her fault, and how selfish, and wicked I am ! It is that we grow older, and troubles must and will increase. Yet I could wish that Sophy did not confide so much to Charlotte, and so much less to me. Selfish, or jealous, or something very bad, I must be, ” thought she, and sighed and then smiled, for she thought how foolish she was, and that it was more worth a smile than a sigh.

She went down to the drawing-room, and there she found Charlotte, and Robert Dodson busily engaged in talking. They stopped as she entered. Charlotte looked as if she knew not why, and Robert Dodson looked very foolish, and conscious as though well aware that they had been talking on a subject that could not be continued before Anne.

It was true that Sophy had begun to make a confidante of her cousin ; and when Lord Stoketon and Captain Herbert had been duly canvassed between them, Sophy sometimes felt that perhaps Anne’s ideas were singular on those subjects, and that Charlotte was a very comfortable and sensible person to talk to. She always had considered her rather foolish : but then she was such a dear good-hearted girl ! and had such a nice little way of flattering !

“ It is odd how every one likes Charlotte ! ” thought Sophy, and then came the thought, “ I wonder whether I ever shall see Lord Stoketon again ! It would be very nice to be Lady Stoketon, and have plenty of jewels and dresses. I would be the best dressed woman in Town. The equipages I would leave to him. He has pretty good taste. ”

Was this the right way for a good sort of girl to think of the man she was going to marry? Perhaps it was not natural, but still it was the way in which Sophy Grey thought of being Lady Stoketon, when she had been talking to Charlotte Daventry.

At length invitations began to flow in, and like all the rest of the world's good things, they came all at once; and now the only question from Mrs. Grey was, "My dear, shall we go to the Gilberts', or the Dashwoods', or accept the Mortons', and so come back for the Foleys'? or shall we say we will go to the Cunninghams'?"

"Whichever you please, my dear," sighed Mr. Grey, as he saw with agony the notes and envelopes; short, concise, and numerous, lying on the table, and heard Mrs. Grey enumerate Gilberts, Mortons, Dashwoods, etc. etc., all willing to inflict upon him "the pleasure of seeing them."

"Whichever you please," sighed he. "If it were not for my daughters and Charlotte I never would stir from home again," thought he; and yet Mr. Grey you were not quite right there, for you know very well that once safely removed from your arm-chair, no one enjoys society more than you do!

"You may accept whichever you like, my dear," said Mr. Grey, "only you know you cannot accept all." ("Thank goodness!" thought he, but the thought was not uttered.)

"Perhaps," he added, "it would save the risk of offending, if we accepted none?"

"Accepted none!" ejaculated Mrs. Grey, shocked and alarmed: "my dear Mr. Grey! what, not go to either the Dashwoods', or Mortons', or Foleys', or Cunninghams', or—"

"Heaven defend us!" said unhappy Mr. Grey, holding up his hands, "go to all, my dear! only do not let me hear any more about it. Let me advise that we try to go to all if we can, and then one should hope that, for a year at least, we shall be at peace."

"Very well, Mr. Grey, then I will try how many we can possibly accept;" and away went Mrs. Grey, quite pleased to find her husband so accommodating and unusually willing to go from home.

The only thing that made Anne Grey not quite dislike the idea of leaving home was the hope of meeting Mr. Temple. Anne had not forgotten him, nor had she forgotten that he had been heard to admire Sophy. Sophy remembered this also, and she hoped

to meet him, for she was sure on reflection that he did admire her, and she wished that if he had not done so very decidedly before, he should be made to do so now.

And Charlotte Daventry, what did she feel? She was also going from home, though not to all the visits; and in her room that night, had we watched and seen her face, there might have been observed that dark, deep expression dwelling in her eyes—that peculiar smile curling on her lips.

“My labours are beginning,” murmured she, “much already! but now the toil increases,—the field is open! Yes it shall! Father, Father!” almost screaming forth that name, “Father! could you see me?” The smile brightened, and the eyes flashed. “Father! you *do* see me! I know it—I feel it! It must be, or never—never! when her arm was round me—her sweet, innocent face—*her kindness!* Oh, father!”

Charlotte Daventry threw herself on the bed, and sobs and groans burst forth. It was anguish spoke in those groans, and they were repeated—continued—still and still again.

But, let us watch no more! let us turn to a happier scene;—let us turn to the chamber of the pure and innocent—let us see Anne Grey!—meek, quiet, happy—risen from her knees, the tear of gratitude and love still on her cheek. “Bless them, Oh my God! Bless them, O God, and may they be blessed!” was her mental prayer for those she loved; and the kiss of sisterly love, that warm affectionate kiss, had been given, as the sisters threw their arms around each other’s necks; and then the soft ‘good night,’ and the ‘good night’ repeated, and then the room was still—and surely God was there.

CHAPTER XV.

IF I was writing a romantic novel, I should say “dark and gloomy was the day which witnessed, etc.—” but, as it is, I say “bright and

unclouded was the morning," which saw the departure of Mr. Grey's family-coach from the door at Weston.

"My dear Sir," said William, who found himself compelled to make the fifth in the family coach, "never lay commands on me again."

Mr. Grey smiled — "Your mother has commanded both of us. We are fellow-sufferers, William," said he, with an expressive shrug of his shoulders.

"How I like going from home!" said Sophy, in a joyous tone. "The sun always shines and looks twice as bright as usual."

"I suppose," said William, drily, "the brightest sun is for a ball, a degree less brilliant for a visit of a week, a slight increase for a two-night affair, and only the light of a farthing rushlight for a dinner visit — that is, if you could see it! Is it so?" said he, as if he thought he had been putting down a very silly, missish remark.

"Exactly," said Sophy, "you have got the exact gradations; but you have not said anything of going to town. The sun for that would be:—"

"'Dark with excess of light,' I presume," said William. "That must be the reason why the sun is never visible in London. Put that down in your journal or note book, one or both of which I hope you have."

"No," said Sophy, "I have not, shame to say. My journal is the journal of my heart!" laying her hand on her heart, looking at William, and making him laugh at last.

The reader should know that we are on our road to Hilton, the seat of James John Cunningham, Esq., M. P. for the county of——, consequently a regular attendant with wife and family on county balls; a bustling, pompous man, who faithfully represented in himself, for the benefit of his constituents, all the activity and pomposity of the county.

James John Cunningham, Esq., had a wife, three daughters grown up, four sons, all happily at school, a maiden sister, a good fortune, and a tolerably good house, which was always compelled to hold more people than it conveniently could.

The three Miss Cunninghams were the three Miss Cunninghams, and nothing more: one sung, and did not play; one played, and did not sing; one drew, and did not play or sing. One had dark hair

and light eyes ; one had dark eyes and light hair ; one had both light hair and light eyes ; and these were the characteristics of the Miss Cunninghams. Nobody could mistake them one for the other, they thought, they were “ so different ! ” They had always taken care to be “ so different ! ” to learn “ all the different things ! ”

The Greys were invited to Hilton, as usual, to attend a county ball. It is not the etiquette for mamas to take out more than two daughters at once ; and as Charlotte Daventry was in the light of a daughter, it was impossible all three should go to Hilton. Anne declared, over and over again, that she should prefer staying at home, and that it would amuse Charlotte, and do her good to go. — Charlotte as firmly declared the same thing, with regard to herself and Anne.

The point was decided at last by the opportune offer of Lady Dowton to receive Charlotte at Westhorpe, during the Greys' absence. Sir John, whom I have already mentioned, as that nonentity — a thorough-going hunting and sporting man, rode over on purpose to press her acceptance of the invitation ; and the same day that saw the Greys' departure for Hilton saw that of Charlotte Daventry, with her little brisk-looking French maid, to Sir John Dowton's.

We will leave Charlotte to be talked to death by Lady Dowton, if it should so occur, and go with the Greys to Hilton, where we find a large party assembled. Amongst those in the drawing-room, dressed for dinner, one immediately started forward on the Miss Greys' entrance, his hand extended, a smile on his face, and a hearty ‘ how do you do ’ on his lips ; and Sir Henry Poynton received in return the pretty smiles of Anne Grey. He was soon seated by her, and looked with admiration enough for a younger man on her placid face, as she sat listening to the expression of his good fortune in having met them, and to the beginning of “ quite a new story,” which Anne had heard only three times before.

There was a large and miscellaneous party at Hilton, large enough to excuse me from the task of describing them.

At dinner, Anne found herself placed with Sir Henry Poynton (of course) on one side, and a quiet sensible-looking young man on the other, whose first observation was, “ that they had become very near neighbours. ”

“ Does he mean at dinner ? No, certainly ! ” thought Anne, “ who

can he be?" But as her companion seemed to think that she must know as much about him as he did about her, she did not like to show her ignorance, but trusted to a fortunate mention of his name to enlighten her, and a question addressed to him, headed 'Foley,' soon gave the desired information. However, Anne made but little use of this intelligence, for Sir Henry Poynton engaged her attention.

"That was a melancholy day, Miss Anne," said he, "that you were all called away from Hadley. I can assure you we all missed you uncommonly, and we praised you and talked about you all the evening, except Stoketon, who, by the bye, never said a word! Do you know I rather suspect something there! But never mind! I will not ask questions. Poor Stoketon—he was very bad!—But we were all very dull that evening, and we talked about you. Even Temple seemed dull, and you know what an amusing fellow he is. Dalton was worse than usual, and Lady Hadley was low. By the bye, Miss Anne, you ought to be very proud of a certain person's good opinion. I have just mentioned his name. Ah! you must not blush to hear yourself praised, though to tell you the truth, when I was a young man I used not to dislike to see a woman blush. It is very pretty and becoming, and besides that, it always augurs something favourable. When a girl was known to blush because Harry Poynton was named (I was called Harry Poynton then), I always knew what inference to draw."

Poor Anne's blushes increased, as good-natured Sir Henry so kindly pointed out to her the inferences he would draw from them; and though she felt some curiosity to know who the person was who had praised her, she almost hoped Sir Henry would forget to name him.

"But, as I was saying, Miss Anne, you ought to be proud of a certain person's praise. He is very fastidious, I assure you, and he did say such things when that Lady Mary Dalton (to tell you a secret, I do not like that girl,)" in a confidential tone—"when that Lady Mary chose to say something not quite—you know—not quite—"

Sir Henry had got into a scrape—but *n'importe!* he blundered on—"He defended you, you know—He did take your part so well. I could have cried—'bravo, Temple!' and he completely silenced

her silly simpering ladyship!—she never said a word again that evening; and yet Temple was quite quiet—you understand—perfectly gentlemanlike—and yet we all saw what he meant.”

Did not Anne's heart flutter with delight? Did she not think Sir Henry Poynton the dearest old man that ever lived?—As to the fact that Lady Mary Dalton had abused her—that was nothing; and when she retired to her room that night, she said to Sophy,—“What a very pleasant evening it has been!”

“Why, then, you must have been indebted to the absence of any one to talk to, or to old Sir Harry Poynton's agreeable prosing, for I never saw you speak to any one but him, unless you call talking to those nonentities, the Cunningham girls, conversation.”

“Certainly,” said Anne, “they are not very amusing;” and she did now begin to wonder what it was that made her think it such a very pleasant evening.

“To be sure,” thought she, and she began to see that it had not been so pleasant, “I am Sophy's sister. It was natural he should defend me!”

Sophy was not quite so well pleased as Anne had been. She had expected to have seen either Lord Stoketon or Captain Herbert, and she had found neither. It was true she had made acquaintance with George Foley, and he had seemed very well inclined to rejoice that they were become neighbours. She had perceived, as she and Anne had entered the room, and had been addressed as Miss Greys', that he gave a little surprised, agreeable start, as much as to say,—“I am glad to see what nice people our new neighbours are;” and Sophy determined to make him think so still more before the evening was over.

George Foley was very quiet, had nothing like brilliancy, and perhaps appeared to least advantage in mixed society, and on a first acquaintance; but he was an excellent person, with an amiable disposition, steady principles, and sound useful sense. He was well informed, and might even be called clever—if cleverness here do not mean genius. Had he been a little more quick, or presuming, he would have been more considered; but as it was, he was merely a quiet, gentlemanlike person, of whom every one thought highly, and whom prudent mamas called an ‘excellent young man,’ because he would have a large fortune. Sophy had found out

during the evening, that his sister had given a favourable account of them, that he had a due appreciation of humour, and if he could not say brilliant things himself, he could understand those that were said by others.

Nothing but the ball was talked and thought of the following day. There was a young lady in the house who had never been to one before—so she wondered whether she should like it, and assured all who listened to her that she should be ‘so shy’—and over and over again she was assured she would not—that nothing was so little alarming as a ball. A great deal of pretty and interesting fear was displayed, and a great deal of good-nature expended in persuading her that there would be nothing very terrible in that which no one wished her to do against her will, and which she had dreamt of with delight for the last week.

The evening of the ball arrived, and as Sophy and Anne entered the drawing-room, ready attired, George Foley’s animated expression as he spoke to Anne, and engaged her for the first dance, betrayed at once that, however lovely he might consider her sister, he thought her still more fascinating.

And now the party were all assembled—cloaks, coats, hats, and furred shoes sought for, found, and put on—the carriages filled—and off they drove. On entering the ball-room at—George Foley was ready to place himself near Anne, and to watch that she did not forget her engagement.

A quadrille was in the act of finishing; and when the music recommenced, Sophy and Anne, with their respective partners, placed themselves in the middle of the room for the infinite pleasure of standing so many minutes side by side, and face to face; of sliding to one side, and then to the other, taking hold of one hand, and then of the other, and then, inestimable advantage! of giving the tip of a finger to a *vis-à-vis*, and avoiding the sleeve of a *vis-à-vis*’ partner; and for all this did the three Miss Cunninghams envy Sophy and Anne Grey, as they were left partnerless to form a part of the long formal row that lined the walls of the ball-room. Sophy’s eyes were sparkling, her step was light and buoyant, her laugh gay and happy; Anne’s countenance was also lit up with animation, her smile just bright enough, her complexion just tinged with sufficient colour, and her figure moved lightly and gracefully along.

George Foley watched her through the quadrille, and thought he never had seen so lovely a being.

“Your sister is not here, I think?” said Anne to him.

“No, she was engaged elsewhere. She is at the Downtons’.”

“Indeed!” replied Anne. “I am glad of that, for my cousin, Charlotte Daventry, is there.”

George Foley looked pleased by Anne’s manner. He was gratified on his sister’s account, and perhaps a little on his own, for who has not felt, at times, that interest in our relatives may not be far distant from interest in ourselves? The quadrille was soon at an end, and Sophy and Anne both returned to their seats. Sophy was asked for the next dance, quadrille, waltz, or galoppe, and Anne was also engaged. The music began, and—“waltz or quadrille? Oh! a waltz!” “I am so glad!” said Sophy, with one of her brightest smiles; and just then she saw the back of a head amongst the heads of a party who had just entered, and were making their way through the crowd to the other side of the room.

Whether there was anything very peculiar in the sight—any very remarkable characteristic in the wave of the hair, I do not know; but Sophy gave a little start, and whispered to Anne, who was scarcely near enough to hear, “It certainly is! Do you see? It must be!” in a tone of joyful surprise; but Anne did not hear—she was attending to the civil nothings of a stupid partner.

In a few minutes more the owner of the head turned round—his eyes wandered about the room in search of something—and it was soon very evident what that something must have been! His eye fell on Sophy, and, in another instant, the joyful start and the heightened colour showed that he saw and recognised her; and Lord Stoketon, for it was no other, was making his way towards her, passing to the right and left, gliding, and sliding, till, with beaming face, and extended hand, he was close to her, and “Miss Grey!” burst from his lips.

Sophy looked quite as happy and conscious as Lord Stoketon wished, and he, whilst he looked at her, forgot that he was still holding her hand, though the hearty, impressive shake ought to have been long at an end. Sophy’s partner stared, and wondered who he was, and thought—I don’t know what! but whatever it might be, Lord Stoketon did not care. He cared for nothing but

seeing Sophy Grey again, and ensuring her as his partner for the next dance—for two or three dances—perhaps for life!

CHAPTER XVI.

THE next dance was a happy one. Lord Stoketon said a great deal that could have but one meaning.

“I thought I never should see you again, Miss Grey,” said he. “I almost gave it up; and yet, do you know, I shall never disbelieve in presentiments again! When Jack Nugent said to me, ‘there is a ball at——, do you mean to go?’ I felt, in a moment, that nothing would keep me away. I felt that I should meet you there! and I came for no other purpose. I hope you believe me, Miss Grey?” Miss Grey found it easier to believe in silence than to speak. “If you had seen me that miserable evening that you all went, I think you would have pitied me. Do you think you could?” and Sophy was appealed to with such a tender yet delighted countenance, that she felt it would be neither easy nor prudent to express any pity.

“I don’t know why I should,” said she, looking at her fan.

“You don’t know why you should?” said Lord Stoketon, following her eyes to the fan. “You don’t know why? Then shall I tell you? Will you let me tell you?” Lord Stoketon, your *vis-à-vis* is waiting for you! You must go through your figure, and Sophy Grey is saved for the present. The act of dancing sobered him a little, and he forgot that he was on the point of telling what could not be told without leading to another little question, and another little answer.

If Mrs. Grey had been by, how would she have reprobated the figure which obliged young men to leave their partners! How would she have wondered that it was not better contrived! that it was not left out!

“Are Mr. and Mrs. Grey, and your sister, here?” said Lord

Stoketon, as he returned to his place. "I shall be so glad to see them all again!"

"They are all here," said Sophy. "Oh! there is Anne, dancing in the next set!—do you see?—with a tall dark person, close to that girl with red ribbons in her hair; (what extraordinary figures one sees at a country ball!) There! Anne is looking this way: I am sure she sees you."

"Yes," and Lord Stoketon smiled so broadly that Anne must have seen, and she certainly did, for she smiled again, and looked surprised; and then they saw her answering a question of her tall partner's, and Lord Stoketon turned again to Sophy.

"You live near here, Miss Grey?" said he.

"Only four miles off."

"Only four miles!" in a joyful tone. "How long do you stay at Hilton?"

"Two days more."

"I wish they would think of asking me there for two nights: what do you think, Miss Grey? Do you think I could be thought an acquisition?" laughing. "No, I see you don't; but do introduce me if you can, I can but try my chance. Are there any daughters? Heaven grant there are some Miss Cunninghams!"

"Why?" said Sophy, not quite liking he should be so anxious.

"Why, do not you see, if by a lucky accident there are any, and they are old or ugly or partnerless, I have nothing to do but to beg 'papa and mama' to introduce me, to one or all, and then Hilton is mine! They would be brutes not to invite me."

"Well!" said Sophy, all her unpleasant feeling vanished, "You may be quite satisfied on that point, for there are no less than three Miss Cunninghams, all dull and plain, and wishing for partners. But I shall pity you if you go through the duties of quadrille with all three."

"What a nuisance," exclaimed Lord Stoketon. "The music has stopped! Those people must have left out half the figure. I am sure they did that once or twice before. You will introduce me then to the Cunninghams, Miss Grey? pray do not forget: you do not know how anxious I am to be at Hilton the next two days." This was said too tenderly to require an answer, and Sophy was saved the trouble of an extraneous remark by seeing her brother

approach ; and as William came up, an introduction took place between himself and Lord Stoketon. “ Why, in the name of patience, am I to be bored with Lord Stoketon ! ” thought William, who had just been persuaded by his mother that he ought to dance with one of the Miss Cunninghams. Lord Stoketon and Sophy went in search of Mr. and Mrs. Grey, and Mrs. Grey was so surprised and delighted as she saw him approach, that she was almost betrayed into calling him her “ dear Lord Stoketon. ”

It was impossible that he could bear to resign Sophy to the chaperonage of “ mama,” and the risk of another partner, so “ she must find Mr. and Mrs. Cunningham for him ; ” and they walked round and round the room, and every second turn were surprised they did not find those for whom they had forgotten to look. At last Sophy felt that she had walked long enough with Lord Stoketon, and then,—it was very strange,—but Mr. and Mrs. Cunningham were found directly ; and the introduction took place to the evident satisfaction of the Cunninghams. As Lord Stoketon took Miss Grey back to her seat, he whispered something about what he would go through for her sake ; and Sophy’s blush had not subsided when she returned to her mother.

Mrs. Grey thought she never had felt so happy before, and that there never was so charming a young man as Lord Stoketon ! She frowned off a young man who was evidently looking that way, wrapped up “ dear Sophy ” in her boa, for fear she should catch cold, and advised her to sit still next dance. Lord Stoketon was invited to Weston, and gave a joyful assent, and thought, in his heart, that there never was a better tempered, more kind hearted woman than Mrs. Grey.

The ball at length was over—the last waltz had been waltzed—the last quadrille walked through. Some, there were, who thought it the longest—some the shortest ball that ever was given—some who felt sure of a bad night from pleasure—some who felt sure of a bad night from disappointment—some who felt neither pleasure nor pain, but were glad it was over before four o’clock, as that was exactly the hour which ensured them a head-ach.

The cloaks and shawls were found, Sophy had the pleasure of hearing good Mrs. Cunningham hoping and wishing that Lord Stoketon would come to Hilton for a few days ; apologizing and

grieving over “a small room” — “quite ashamed of offering” — “hoped he would excuse;” and then Lord Stoketon’s ready, joyous acceptance—his assurances that he “always preferred a small room.” “The point is gained!” whispered he to Sophy, as he put on her cloak. “Thank goodness, I may see you to-morrow, and not go home a poor miserable wretch as I feared! Did you hear the old lady? so apologetic! I did it well, did not I? I hope you will not catch cold,” as the door opened and the cold night air blew in. “Don’t come out, Lord Stoketon,” vociferated Mrs. Grey: “don’t come out on any account! I am so sorry we cannot take you home.” “Thank you,” said he, not giving up Sophy’s arm till he had brought her to the carriage steps, and then “Good-night, Miss Grey,” and the hand was offered: Miss Grey’s was put out; and it was taken and pressed.

When in the carriage, Mrs. Grey could no longer repress her delight.

“My dear,” said she to Sophy, “he is handsomer than ever!” No one had ever called Lord Stoketon handsome before.

“Do you think so?” said Sophy, in an assenting tone.

“He is more attentive than ever!” whispered Anne to her.

It was nearly dark, Sophy took hold of the hand that rested near her, carried it to her lips, and kissed it, and Anne knew that Sophy was not indifferent to Lord Stoketon.

Mrs. Grey talked incessantly, the whole way home, ejaculating over and over again—“I am so pleased—I’m so glad we have seen him again!” but she could get very little conversation from her companions. Mr. Grey was usually silent in a carriage: Sophy had much to think of—much to enjoy. Anne had much to think of, too—much to feel—much to delight her, yet, as her hand was raised to Sophy’s lips,—as she received that tacit avowal that Sophy loved Lord Stoketon, will it be thought strange if, as her hand was released again, the tears filled her eyes? They filled to overflowing—and Anne was roused from her mingled and busy train of thoughts and emotions, by the tear which dropped on her hand.

She started, and almost wondered at herself that she should weep where all was joy!—when her wishes were realized! Yet, who that has known a sister’s love, who that has passed from childhood to womanhood, hand in hand, and heart to heart, with one only

sister,—who that has grown as she grew—ripened as she ripened into intelligence and beauty—felt, each year, the added sweetness of that tie, as feelings, sentiments, and intelligence increased into perfection,—who that has intrusted every care, sorrow, joy, and hope, and been trusted in return, will not also have felt that there are tears to be mingled with those smiles, regrets to be blended with that happiness, when first we know and hear that the sister of our home, our bosom, our affection, is leaving us for a new home, for a tie still dearer? Home—the sweet hours of confidence,—the pure kiss of sisterly love,—the joint room,—the fire-light talk,—the laugh,—the smile,—the tear—all are over! And loved though she still may be—happy though she ought to be, and *is* in her sister's happiness, loving and esteeming the new relation, who so loves her sister, still let her weep! It must be so:—it must be that she feels, though scarcely sorrow, yet regret.

And so Anne felt, and thoughts like these passed through her mind, as her sister's hand unclasped her own—as the gentle pressure was withdrawn. Days gone by rushed through her mind:—the sunny hour—the summer ramble—the fire-side talk—the falling tears—the infectious laugh—the kind “good night!” all crowded on her mind! No wonder that the tears should fall—yes, let them fall—yes, Anne Grey, weep now as that first link in the chain of youth is broken! Weep now; and oh! that in after years you may not weep again more bitter tears, as you think of that hour when, over your unsullied heart, your light, unbroken spirit, came the first sign that the link was severed—that child-like joys and morning gladness in their first freshness were departing! Yes, and let her weep—the young light-hearted being who leaves her home, her father's house, the glad looks, the kind tones of parents, sisters, brothers. Yes, let her weep too, for adore and love and cherish as her husband may, yet can he not give back such love as theirs;—yet can he not restore the hours of youth and innocence, the father's blessing and the mother's care. No—let us weep for her, for them. Life is before her now unveiled. The beautiful, the bright romance is at an end, and she has waked to grieve awhile,—to mourn,—to struggle—and to die!

Something of all this must have been felt, as Anne and Sophy found themselves alone in their room that night. Many questions

were to be asked by Anne ; much to be related by Sophy, Lord Stoketon had said a great deal—there was no longer a doubt.

“ Yes, Anne,” said she, as she stood musing over the fire, her long hair unloosed and falling down her shoulders, the ball dress thrown off, and the dressing-gown substituted, “ yes Anne, it soon will be decided ! Sophy Grey will be no more ! and—” She could not go on : she bent over the mantel-piece and burst into tears. Anne’s arm was thrown round her ; her gentle voice inquiring if she were unhappy, yet feeling that she might weep without sorrow.

“ Dearest Sophy,” said Anne, “ is there anything more than the hurry—the agitation—?”

“ No, no,” said Sophy, raising her head, and trying to laugh, “ no, no, it is only that I am foolish. I am very happy ! I ought to be ! Indeed I am, dear Anne ; but somehow, it is so new, and I did not expect to see him ; and to leave you Anne !”—the tears were beginning to flow again : she put her arms round Anne’s neck and kissed her, and Anne cried too—and then—they could smile again. They talked, and still talked, till the smile became a laugh, and Sophy could think how pleasant it would be to be a chaperon, and take Anne out, and have a house of her own ; and she could fall asleep and sleep so soundly that she did not awake till the lady’s maid had twice said, “ It’s getting very late, ma’am.”

But Anne could not sleep, or if she did, it was a sort of half-sleep, and the morning sun found her vainly trying to determine whether Lord Stoketon would be satisfied without dancing the next dance with Sophy, or whether the musicians meant to go back to their places, instead of walking about the room with their instruments—or whether, after all, they were not Lord Stoketon and not the musicians.

“ It’s getting very late, ma’am,” decided the question ; and Anne, after vainly trying to save Sophy from being disturbed, arose, and she, and her sister were soon dressed. Sophy looked gay and blooming as ever ; Anne a little more pale, and yet, may I say it, not less pretty than when, on the preceding evening, she had called forth the admiration of Mr. George Foley : for bright and dazzling though the ball attire may be—fairy-like and brilliant, yet there is a softer charm in the quiet simplicity of the morning costume, at least so thought George Foley, as Sophy and Anne entered the breakfast room.

“ If she was lovely last night,” thought he, “ she is still more so now. I like to see a woman in her home dress—her home simplicity. It is a greater test.”

“ Robert Dodson will make such a good husband for Charlotte ?” thought Mrs. Grey, that morning, as she looked at Anne and George Foley, the latter of whom was intently listening to all Anne would say, whilst she seemed quite contented to talk to him.

“ How pleasant it is,” thought good, affectionate Mrs. Grey, “ to see one’s children so much liked ! I’m sure I never thought Anne a beauty before !” “ Mr. Grey,” said she, when they were alone, “ what a pleasing young man Mr. George Foley is ! I suppose he will have a very large fortune on his father’s death. I should suppose Mr. Foley is by no means a young man. ”

“ As his son has a very large allowance, my dear, we will not kill him just yet,” replied Mr. Grey.

CHAPTER XVII.

LORD Stoketon arrived just in time for dinner. He was cordially greeted by the Cunninghams. William Grey had had a little hint from his mother to be very good friends with him, so he asked him before dinner, as they stood together over the fire, if he did not think Miss Cunningham very ugly, and having received an affirmative shrug in reply, he thought he had done his duty—looked triumphantly at his mother, and seated himself in an arm-chair, wondering what on earth the Cunninghams could ask people to their house for !

During the evening Lord Stoketon was very agreeable ; at least so thought Sophy and Mrs. Grey ; so thought Mrs. Cunningham and several others. He was in high spirits and talked and rattled away, and as conversation was general he had no opportunity to devote himself exclusively to Sophy. His time was well employed in talking to Mrs. Grey, and to Mrs. Cunningham, taking bets from Sir

Arthur Vincent, and looking at Sophy every minute that could be spared from listening to Mrs. Cunningham's speeches (which he did not hear), or attending to Mrs. Grey's happy, chatty talk, of which he only knew the end and the beginning. He said "beautiful," to a drawing of Miss Cunningham's; declared he had never heard anything so charming as a song from Miss Arabella; and actually turned over the leaves of Miss Mary's music book, as she waded through her air 'con variazioni.' It was not quite at the right moment, it is true, but Sophy saved him from turning over in the middle of a difficult passage. He had stood ten minutes listening to a new story of Sir Henry Poynton's; he had wondered how James John Cunningham, Esq., could get through all the business he had on his hands,—looked seriously aware that a member for a county was a great and responsible character; and in short—Lord Stoketon was very agreeable!

Still no happy recess, no whist or écarté party, no lively talkers ensured the quiet, private conversation. The room was a large square room—furnished in a large square style: no one could retire to a quiet unobtrusive sofa or table, and hope to escape observation. A lamp was stuck in every corner: a table scrupulously pushed as near as possible to the wall; a *chaise-longue* before it; a round table in the middle of the room, and a piano-forte with its length against the wall, well lighted and conspicuous. Lord Stoketon watched Sophy out of the room at night, and wondered why people went to bed so early, for he was still manœuvring for a little private conversation; and Sophy went up stairs thinking she need not have been so much alarmed at the idea of his coming to Hilton, for after all there was nothing so very particular in his manner.

The next day was not more propitious to Lord Stoketon. The ladies were all expected to be very desirous of paying their respects to two or three neighbours of the Cunninghams, who were rather nearer to them than to the Greys. It seemed quite unthought of that any gentleman should make one of the heavy coach and civility party; so the ladies were to be pleased, and anxious to see their acquaintance, and quite satisfied that nothing was so charming as making the agreeable to one another all the morning in a carriage. The gentlemen of the party were expected to be very desirous of the advantage of an excellent day's shooting, and it could have scarcely

been believed that any one of the number who was neither old, rheumatic, nor gouty, could fail to think it the only possible occupation for the morning.

So Sophy, with a little frown, put on her pretty bonnet at the glass, resigned to the long female drive, to call on people she could see any day she pleased, and never cared to see; and Lord Stoketon put on his shooting jacket, and, against all etiquette, brought his gun into the drawing-room, just to see whether Miss Grey looked sorry he was going—to say a few last words, and to keep all the party waiting and wondering where he was.

However, he consoled himself by thinking he would get back in time for that delightful hour for conversation, that proverbial moment for a coze, the dusky, fire-light hour before the dressing bell has sounded.

Lord Stoketon did get back in excellent time; he hurried into the drawing-room in the happy anticipation of finding Sophy there, of seeing her blush and look surprised and pleased at his early return; but alas! Lord Stoketon did not calculate on the at-homeness and agreeableness of Mrs. Cunningham's neighbours; and the slow pace of Mr. Cunningham's horses. When he entered the drawing-room in eager expectation, nothing met his eye but a forlorn deserted looking room! the fire almost extinct—the window open. It was quite evident that the party were not returned.

A door was heard. Lord Stoketon listened. "Perhaps they are come," thought he.

The door opened, and enter, not Miss Grey, not Mrs. Cunningham—but the footman, having recollected at last that there was, or ought to be, a fire.

"Are the ladies come back?" asked Lord Stoketon.

"No, my Lord."

"Do you think they will be back soon?"

"I don't know, my Lord, but they're seldom back till dressing-time;"—and the footman, relinquishing the hope of making the fire burn without a candle, sticks, and brown paper, left the room.

"How provoking!" ejaculated Lord Stoketon. "Hang that old woman! Did she think I came here to be sent out shooting all the morning, and to talk to her all the evening!"

If any of you have ever been in love — have walked home from shooting at twice your usual pace—have outwitted master of the house, dogs, and game-keepers, all for one particular object—have come home and found yourself outwitted—your object lost—then you will not think that Lord Stoketon was an ill-tempered man, because his good-humour failed him when he found a cold deserted drawing-room, and no Sophy Grey, on his return from shooting at Hilton.

The footman's prediction was verified.—The ladies did not come home till dressing-time. Lord Stoketon met them in the hall—looked as cross as he could at Mrs. Cunningham—and said to Sophy,—“How late you are! I have been back this hour!”

Sophy ought to have been flattered, and gone into a rage with Mrs. Cunningham too; but I don't know whether she did or not.

Equally unpropitious was the evening.—Lord Stoketon, poor man! was actually forced to play at whist. His good-nature was so forcibly worked upon that he could not refuse, and, giving a despairing look towards Sophy, who was laughing and talking to Sir Arthur Vincent with provoking happiness, he sat down, ruined his partner, and made the fortune of his opponents.

Anne and George Foley had been more fortunate than Sophy and Lord Stoketon. They had, it is true, been separated as irrevocably during the day; but they had sat together at dinner, and Anne had begun to think Mr. Foley very agreeable and sensible, and to look on it as a matter of course that he should come and talk to her whenever there was an opportunity. Next to Edward Temple she thought him the pleasantest person of her acquaintance. She hardly knew, indeed, how to compare the two—for she felt so differently towards them. She felt perfectly at her ease with George Foley—so much as she might have felt with a brother, or a cousin; and she talked to him whenever there was time for it, smiled when she found him by her at dinner, and never thought that he or any one else could draw any inference from her doing so—never thought that Mrs. Grey had already calculated the length of time that would elapse before his proposal—speculated whether she and Sophy should be married on the same day—and doubted whether it would be better not, as there was an idea of its being unlucky!—Never

thought that the Miss Cunninghams said "What a flirt Miss Anne Grey is! Mama would never let us behave as she does. So quiet, too, with it! as if she did not know what she was doing."—Never thought that George Foley himself believed she could not be quite unconscious of his admiration—never thought he had owned to himself that he loved her.

No, Anne Grey! how was it possible you should think this? How was it possible you should see that his eyes were always upon you—that the colour sometimes rose when you spoke to him—that delight was in his face when you smiled as he drew near—that he was negligent to all the world but you—that he listened to the sound of your voice—that he tried to solve your opinions—to find out your sentiments—to tell you his own—to be delighted if they concurred with yours—to listen with his eyes fixed on you when you sung—to look sad when you spoke to any but him? In short, Anne Grey, we all know you have no acuteness in discovering your own powers of attraction!

So Anne Grey sat, happily self-deceived that evening with George Foley by her side, never dreaming that the Miss Cunninghams were watching her—that Mrs. Grey was peeping at her, from behind her "four by honours," or that any one could be thinking about her.

They had been talking (an appropriate subject) of agreeableness.

"Do you know Edward Temple?" said George Foley.

Anne assented, but with a little start.

"He is, perhaps, one of the most agreeable people one knows," continued George Foley. "He has promised to come to us at Chatterton this month. He is often with us," added he.

"Indeed!" said Anne.

It was just that joyous, happy "indeed" which follows the intelligence of something unexpected, yet pleasant. It made George Foley look at her; but he gained nothing by the scrutiny.

"I should think they would ask us to meet him sometimes, or he will come to see us," thought she; and she smiled before she knew that George Foley was observing her. She looked up and caught his eye. He quickly withdrew it. Anne coloured. He wished he could have asked why she had smiled?

The next morning, 'good byes' were uttered, and Lord Stoketon had said to Sophy—"Miss Grey, you must expect to see me at

Weston—Mr. and Mrs. Grey have both been so kind as to invite me. You will not make me repent my impatience to come?" added he—"You will not look cold and distant?"

There was no time for more to be said; the good byes were all uttered, and Sophy must follow her mother, who had lingered as long as she possibly could, and one more 'good bye,' and again Sophy Grey was separated from Lord Stoketon.

And now must we pause here? In the generality of novels, when a hero is separated from a heroine, it calls forth a long train of retrospect and reflection—Many new ideas are started—many original sentiments expressed—much that is very instructive is drawn from that interesting fact, that the hero has parted from the heroine. Much of his former life and character is then exposed to our view. We find that he has been unfortunate; that he has formed a lasting and heart-harrowing attachment before his admission to school; that he is a disappointed man; that he has a father whom no one knows whether he is to be heir to or not; that he is handsome, clever, agreeable, fastidious, generous, brave, open-hearted, a poet, a genius, a saver of the lives of unfortunate children who fall into the water, an owner of a magnificent Newfoundland dog, a passionate admirer of Byron, a *roué*, *blasé* with the world—and, in short, a hero.

All this we learn on the first separation from our heroine, to whom we are led to believe he is not indifferent. Much, too, do we learn of her; that she is lovely as she is amiable—sensitive as she is lovely, and, like a gentle flower, shrinking and retiring from all, but from the eye of our *roué* of a hero.

They are separated a second time, and then we find that fondest hopes decay—that the life of man is short at the longest—that every thing in this world is uncertain—that our expectations are never realized—that our hopes are always disappointed—and a great deal more, which is all so interesting and true, that the reader never attempts to doubt or deny it, but sighs and wipes away a tear, and thinks 'what a charming book it is!'

Lord Stoketon is separated from Sophy Grey! Must I then pause? This would be *selon les règles*; but even a separation between a hero and a heroine is too common-place a circumstance to call for any pause in my unromantic every-day-life story. I cannot moralize on

so slight an occasion.—I must take my heroine quietly home, and leave Lord Stoketon to think with rational, calculating soberness, how many weeks will elapse before he sees her again.

CHAPTER XVIII.

CHARLOTTE Daventry returned home a short time before the rest of the party. She was ready to receive them, to look, and to say how glad she was to see them again, to make them feel what an affectionate warm-hearted girl she was, and to give to each the impression that she was peculiarly happy in their own peculiar return;—to make even William say to himself, “she certainly has the finest eyes I ever saw.”

Charlotte had liked her visit, as she said, “very well. Oh! quite as well as she could like it! They were very kind. Dear Lady Dowton was so kind! but still she did not feel happy without them. She had wished for them so often! She had thought of Sophy all the day of the ball. She had wondered whether Anne’s singing had been as much admired as it ought to be!” and then, when alone with Sophy, she was ready to hear all about Lord Stoketon; to ask with eagerness whether she had met him, and to get up and dance round the room when she heard that he had actually been there. To listen, and laugh, and half cry; and call her, her dear, dear Sophy—her dear beautiful Lady Stoketon!

Charlotte was ready also to listen to Anne, as they sat alone together in her room in the twilight hour—that hour of confidence and unreserve, which has seen the unfolding of many a tale, the revealing of many a secret, which, as it came to light, made bright and cheerful even the duskiness, and dulness of that hour! She was ready to sympathise with her, to forestal the expression of those feelings of sorrow that mingled with her joy.

“Dear Anne,” said she, as she pressed her hand, “how well I can enter into your more serious feelings. Sophy is too light and volatile—too heartless”—she checked herself, “too light-hearted to

feel seriously—to know those strong regrets, which others perhaps might feel, when she is probably about to leave you;—to leave a sister whose love has been perfect, so much greater than was called for—than could be reciprocated!—that is,”—she blushed and checked herself once more; but it was but for a moment, and then again, as if carried on by her feelings, she continued: “And yet, dear Anne, there is one reason for joy in the prospect of Sophy’s marriage! one reason which few perhaps will feel—none perhaps but I alone! *you* never could! *you*, I am sure, would not!—but I—forgive me Anne! I know that *your* forgiveness must be asked, though not with most others placed in your situation would it be necessary to seek forgiveness. But who are like you? No, dearest Anne,” said she, her voice becoming more clear and expressive; each word dropping out marked, clear, distinct, yet low; “no dearest Anne! none but you would need to be asked forgiveness for speaking to them of their own merits! none but you at this moment would not rejoice, *selfishly* rejoice, that the sister for whom she, the superior, the forbearing, the high-minded, had been neglected, should be removed! that that sister should no longer remain a blind before her merits! and that Anne Grey should not for ever be forgotten! that she might at least have a chance no longer to be coldly loved, because a gay, thoughtless, selfish—yes, the truth will out—a vain, presuming, yet good-hearted girl, was her elder sister—was placed in everything above her, and was by her, so unselfishly, so purely loved, that she could not see her fault—could not believe that this sister was too highly appreciated, while she herself was not appreciated at all! Anne Grey I know will still be blind. Then must her friends—then must those who truly love her, rejoice, that she will be no longer undervalued. Then must I, the poor forlorn and ignorant orphan girl! I alone—the dependent on their bounty!—I alone must then rejoice!”

She stopped, her voice had become faltering and trembling with agitation. It had risen as she had spoken the last words. It had risen with her feelings—and at length those feelings had overpowered her utterance—they had overpowered herself.

She stopped almost abruptly. She seemed half-alarmed at what she had said. She looked at Anne, whose surprise and emotion had kept her silent. Her eyes, which had sparkled, almost flashed, with ani-

mation as she spoke, now sunk into quietness—into an expression of contrition—of almost childish shame and bashfulness as she looked at her cousin. The colour came to her face, and she sat for a moment silent and ashamed, looking more like the frightened child who knows it has been naughty, than the grown up responsible being, who had just been uttering thoughts and emotions in such a voice, and with such an expression as hers.

Anne could not speak. A tumult of mingled feelings took away all power of utterance. But Charlotte Daventry was silent but for an instant ; and when she spoke again, the Charlotte Daventry who had just been declaiming as it were with such eloquent enthusiasm—that Charlotte Daventry was gone ! the simple, youthful, childish Charlotte Daventry alone was there.

She looked up at Anne ; half smiled ; yet still looked ashamed. “ Oh ! what must you think of me ! ” said she, “ Oh ! what must you think of me ! Indeed I did not know what I was saying. Perhaps I felt all I said ; that you know,” and she sighed — “ one cannot always help ; but—I would not have said—and yet after all I do not remember ! I don’t know what there was. I don’t know why I should not ! — But I see you are angry, dear, dear Anne ! ” and she put her hand on her shoulder, “ I see you are ; you look so grave—so sorry ! ”

“ No, indeed,” said Anne, “ I have no right to be angry ; but I was surprised. Indeed, dear Charlotte,” said she, after a moment’s pause, “ I think we had better not talk any more on this subject. I do not wish it : but I am not angry.”

“ Thank you,” said Charlotte, quietly, “ you are very kind ; ” and she said no more, for she saw that Anne was in earnest in her wish, and that she looked grave and distressed.

For a moment Charlotte turned her head away. The smile—the dark peculiar smile was on her lips. “ Does the serpent sting ? Father ! you see, you know it does ! ” and the smile was brighter for a moment, and then her face was once more turned towards her cousin, and the smile was gone ; the simple, childish girl, half sorry, half afraid, alone was there.

“ Can it be, ” thought Anne, as she mused that night over what had passed. “ Can it be that there are moments when her imagination is too much excited ? When her intellects—but no ! Oh no !

It cannot be ! It is too horrible ! I cannot understand it. I will not try. Sophy perhaps is vain—a little vain,” thought she, as she mused again a short time after, “She is perhaps a little selfish—and perhaps they do not love me — they do not understand me.” She struggled to repress her feelings, as she half groaned with a pang—a new and bitter sensation she had never known but once before, and then not in all its bitterness ; but once before when Charlotte Daventry had so spoken, had hinted “ what perhaps,” thought Anne, “should not have been spoken—should not have been hinted. But why do I think of it? Why not remain unconscious and happy,” (and never had the word happiness given her such a pang as at that moment.) “ Why not remain unconscious and happy as I used to be? No, she should not—she ought not to have spoken thus : and yet,” thought she, checking herself, “ why do I blame her ? How can I? She is so simple, I should almost say ignorant. She knows so little what she is doing—the harm—the misery she is causing ! She is so carried away by her warmth of heart—her impulses, or by some childish fancy. I dare say she forgets it as soon as it is spoken ; and why should I then remember and allow to weigh upon my mind, that which was uttered alone from caprice, or by accident, which the person herself forgets to feel as soon as uttered, or which perhaps she never feels. But her manner, her voice, her eloquence today—what was it ? What could it have been ? — Oh ! that I had never heard it ! Oh ! that it would not keep recurring to my mind, and sounding in my ears ! Oh ! that I could forget it ! Forget ! Oh yes ! and why should I not ! Do not they all love me ? Do I not have all the affection bestowed to make me happy ? And my dear father ! can she say that *he* does not love me sufficiently : that Henry does not ? She cannot mean that : no, it is impossible !—And yet perhaps before her—perhaps in speaking of me.” She sighed heavily. “ But no, I do not think it ! — and Sophy, dear, dear Sophy : she said that she could not feel, that she was selfish ! Do not I know that she does feel—that she did ?—Yes, yes !” her eyes brightening with the thought, “ yes, yes, Charlotte did not see her ; Charlotte did not know that Sophy wept with me, that she shed tears because she thought of leaving me, of leaving home. Yes, dear Sophy ! when you took my hand and raised it to your lips—when I felt your warm kiss upon it—do you think that then I did

not know that you could feel—that you *did* feel? Did I not know that you loved me? and when she cried that night, was it not because she thought of leaving us—was not her emotion caused by affection—by right feeling? Yes, yes, dearest sister, dearest Sophy, she wrongs you. And yet,” thought she, after a moment’s reflection, “how soundly she slept—how soon forgotten—and once,”—Anne blushed to remember such a thing—yet she did remember it—“once, that next morning, she must have forgotten, for how angrily she spoke!” Yes, Charlotte Daventry, it is enough! The serpent has stung! Your work is begun.

CHAPTER XIX.

THERE had been a small party at Westhorpe (the Dowton’s), during Charlotte Daventry’s stay there, and it had been, what she probably might call an agreeable visit. She had liked the Foleys, who, as we already know, were there, and had been liked by them, for liking, of course, is mutual. She had liked Mr. Crawford, Mr. Foley’s nephew, who was also of the party.

“Oh! yes,” said she to Sophy, “he is very agreeable indeed! He would be just suited to you. He is very clever, and satirical, and tells such droll stories of people.”

Frank Crawford was eldest son and heir to Lord Gleddon. He was, as Charlotte Daventry said, very clever, but he would have been more generally thought agreeable, had not his sarcasms, and his ill-natured stories of his best friends, given a feeling of alarm and insecurity to those who listened to him. He was not an amiable character. Vanity, selfishness, and ill-nature were the prevailing qualities of his mind. It was vanity which made him love his cousin, Isabella Foley. She was a pretty, accomplished, and pleasing girl. She would have a good fortune, and it had always been thought natural by his father that he should marry her. Frank Crawford did not particularly agree in the propriety of this arrangement; but

vanity told him that Isabella must wish for the alliance : and though he was not in love with her, vanity would not allow him to believe that she could love any but him, or that any should dare to seek to marry her without his permission.

Isabella Foley, a quiet, amiable girl, did love Frank Crawford; but it was as a cousin. She never thought of him in the light of a lover. Frank Crawford was not sufficiently attached to his cousin to perceive the nature of her feelings towards him, and he was satisfied so long as she preferred no other ; but he would have hated the man whom she could love better than himself.

This, then, is Frank Crawford, whom Charlotte Daventry, good, simple girl, thought so agreeable—to whom she talked a great deal at Westhorpe, and who talked a great deal to her.

Mrs. and Miss Dashwoods were also there, and one or two others. But the Foleys were the subjects of Charlotte's eulogiums. She loved them all. Mrs. Foley had been so good-natured, and called her ' dear Charlotte,' and had had the tears in her eyes—had actually cried for her, when she said how unhappy she felt the morning they all went to Hilton, and left her. Mr. Foley was so handsome, so polite, so clever, so agreeable !—but as to Isabella !—" she lets me call her Isabella, do you know, already—as to her ! no words can express how very charming and delightful she is ! She is almost—and indeed I often thought of it when I was there—she is almost like you, Sophy—and Anne."

Anne almost started as this was said so *naively* and innocently. She thought of the words that had fallen from her lips on the preceding day. " Yes," thought she, " she is thoughtless, and changing in feeling, and swayed by the childish impulse of the moment."

The Foleys had all liked Charlotte Daventry. Mr. Foley had been flattered by her evident admiration, for she was a handsome girl : but Mrs. and Miss Foley had been actuated by a better motive. Mrs. Foley knew that she was an orphan, and felt she must be unhappy, because all orphans were ; and that she must be amiable, because all people in affliction were, and especially orphans. So she loved her, and her eyes were often filled with tears for her, and she told Isabella to make a friend of her.

Isabella was very ready to follow her mother's advice. She pitied Charlotte Daventry, for who would not pity the child who has lost

the care and affection which none but a parent can give! Moreover, every now and then, in the midst of her gaiety—there was a touch of sadness—a trace of deep emotion—a tone—a look, that went to the heart;—that bespoke that simple, childish, as her manner was, she felt, and felt deeply.

Isabella sought her friendship, and thought herself more than rewarded by the warmth, the gratitude, and the emotion with which it was received. She found with surprise that Charlotte Daventry had known the want of a friend. She found with surprise that her cousins, too gay and happy themselves, had failed in this office—that they were not the thoughtful, kind, and pitying friends, whom Charlotte had hoped to find in cousins of her own age and sex.

Charlotte Daventry did not complain—she seemed afraid of uttering a word that would give any one the impression of their want of consideration and affectionate care for her. She seemed grieved if she let fall anything that could be construed into such an idea; but it was very easy, in spite of her caution, with an artless, unreserved character such as hers, to discover the truth.

It grieved Isabella Foley to think it was so. She had expected to find pleasant companions, and desirable friends in the Miss Greys. She had liked what she had seen of them, especially what she had seen of Anne. She could more easily believe that Sophy might be heartless—too gay, and devoted to society, to feel or think for others: but of Anne it was less easy to believe such a thing—to believe that she was not good-tempered, that she was envious and jealous. Yet it was impossible not to see that this was the case, from those little things which dropped from Charlotte, and for which she immediately checked herself, as though aware that what she had said might be interpreted by Miss Foley to her cousin's disadvantage.

For example—Miss Foley remembered perfectly that both Sophy and Anne had said that Charlotte could not play well, and that she disliked music. She perfectly remembered on one occasion, that Anne had prevented her being asked to play, and she had thought at the time her motive was kind; for Charlotte had sat almost within hearing, blushing, and looking distressed, and she had then supposed she was alarmed at the idea of being made to perform; but she could now guess that her embarrassment arose from a different feeling,

for it appeared that Charlotte not only loved music, but could play beautifully.

Once or twice when Miss Foley and her cousin were alone in the room with her at Westhorpe, she had sat down to the instrument, and played with so much expression, brilliancy, and taste, that both Isabella and Frank Crawford were surprised and enraptured.

Charlotte had often exclaimed, after she had been playing, “How I love music! How I love playing—when I am not afraid of being heard,” she added with a sigh. “Do you mind my playing, Miss Foley?”

“Indeed, I am delighted with it,” said Isabella.

“Oh! but then I had better stop perhaps,” looking alarmed and distressed, “unless you will promise not to mention it. Will you promise not to mention it at Weston?” she said very eagerly.

“Certainly, if it is your wish,” said Miss Foley.

“Oh! thank you, thank you,” with delight, and then seeming to recollect herself, she added, “You know I have no particular reason—I do not know that they would mind”—and getting confused, “You know there is no reason to be jealous—that is—”—getting more and more confused, “I only think, you know, that it is better you should not praise my playing before them—they are so good-natured—so very kind—”

Isabella saw her confusion—her amiable desire to conceal the truth—to unsay or soften it when it had dropped unintentionally. She understood perfectly what Charlotte had tried she should not. She saw that at Weston she was not *allowed* to play well; and she determined to do as Charlotte wished, for peace at home was better than the reputation for accomplishments abroad.

“Go on, dear Miss Daventry,” said she. “You need not be afraid either of Frank or me. We will be very discreet.”

“How very kind you are,” said Charlotte, as though she felt it from her heart, and the tear that glistened in her eye showed that she did.

Isabella was touched, and with all her gentleness she was indignant—“How one may be deceived!” thought she, “so simple and quiet in appearance!”

Of the excellent Mr. Grey, also, there was much to be learnt. Charlotte Daventry spoke of her gratitude to him—of his goodness

in allowing her to live in his family, and seemed to think it so astonishing an act of kindness : yet Isabella saw that the astonishment arose, not from his kindness being so great, but from there being any kindness from *him*. She saw that she wished to feel all the gratitude she expressed, and to make others think it due, but she perceived that she could not.

In short, from the various things which fell from her in the unguardedness and simplicity of her nature, Isabella found that there was but little cause for gratitude. She learnt that Mr. Grey had actually refused to take the guardianship—had refused the dying father's last request, till a larger sum of money had been named—till it had been written down and witnessed. She heard also of his indifference—his want of affection and attention to Charlotte ; his hurrying her away from her home—her father's resting-place—because he wanted to attend the sale of some cattle at Weston ! All this had been gathered from what Charlotte had accidentally disclosed. It was distressing to think of so much worldliness, yet she had before heard the Greys slightly taxed with that failing.

William was the only one of the family of whom she heard only praise. He who professed so little—who at times was almost too blunt in his manner—of him Charlotte spoke with the warmest gratitude. It seemed as though her heart, longing to have something to love and to be grateful to, having hoped and been disappointed, relieved itself in showering all its affection and gratitude where alone it was possible to bestow it.

Isabella Foley's heart fluttered as she heard Charlotte Daventry's expressions of grateful fondness to William, and she thought her still more amiable, and more to be pitied and loved. Isabella Foley was gifted with a warm heart—a little romance—a little of the softness and tenderness of her mother's character. William Grey had already touched that heart, and had awakened a sentiment in her romantic and tender imagination.

Young ladies should certainly never surrender their affections, never be in love till the time when the good, honest, wealthy suitor, has made the offer of his house, hand, and heart ! — when 'papas' have said "yes ;" and 'mamas' agreed :—when the settlements are drawn up—the wedding-ring procured—the wedding-cake prepared and the favours ready-made. Then—sensible, dis-

creet, prudent young lady, at that moment surrender your heart—then try to fall in love—and in the attempt find out whether you do or do not like the man who, in a short time, you will swear to love, honour, and obey. Then too, you—good, honest, wealthy suitor, look to find the devoted, affectionate, confiding wife—Yes, look ; and if, perchance, in her, the dread, the fear, the knowledge of other men's deceit, has made you fail to find all this, then do not blame her, the prudent, rational young lady, now your wife ; but if you will blame any, blame alone those of your own sex who have taught her these cold lessons of wisdom !

Isabella Foley certainly should not have fallen in love, and yet, poor foolish girl, so very nearly had she done so, that she loved to hear the praises of William Grey, and pitied Charlotte Daventry ten times as much, because she praised, and was grateful to him. Perhaps Charlotte Daventry perceived that, as his name was mentioned, Isabella became more intent, and listened more eagerly. Perhaps, too, she perceived, that when Isabella had blushed at the name of William Grey, Frank Crawford had looked proud and indignant, and said an angry word to his cousin. Perhaps she did perceive this ; but it matters not to know.

CHAPTER XX.

“So, then, at last, Maria Pemberton is to be married to Frederic Barton !” said Lady Dowton, one morning during Charlotte Daventry's stay at Westhorpe. “Poor thing ! Miss Barker says it is supposed it will take place in about two month's time. No one knows why they wait so long. I suppose, my dear,” said she, addressing herself to Charlotte Daventry, “the marriage of another young friend of mine will soon take place. Mr. Barton's and his friend Lord Stoketon's marriage will probably not be far distant ? Yes, my dear girl ! You need not look so unconscious, for we all know that Lord Stoketon is violently in love with our dear Sophy ! Do not attempt to deny it.”

“ Ah ! but, Lady Dowton, ” said Charlotte, looking very innocent and childish, “ that cannot be true, for I heard Sophy laughing at him the other day. She said—oh yes ! how she did laugh at him ! she was so droll ! ” and Charlotte laughed at the recollection. “ To be sure it is true about his being in love with her. Oh yes ! I remember that ! ” and she laughed again as if with an irrepressible merriment at the idea of the ludicrous picture Sophy had drawn of him.

“ My charming girl, ” said Lady Dowton, quite excited, “ do tell us all about it ! Here are only the Miss Dashwoods and Mr. Crawford, so you need not mind. ”

“ Oh ! dear, I have nothing to tell ! ” said Charlotte. “ But she said he was such a blundering, good-humoured, simpleton, so very dull, and so confident that she must like him ! She had such fun humouring him ! I do quite long to see him ! ”

“ My dear girl ! ” said Lady Dowton, “ let me see, ” thought she, sinking back, — “ so she laughed at him, did she ? ” to Charlotte.

“ Oh yes, ” said Charlotte.

“ Let me see—there will be time to write before dinner—to save the post—I can contradict that report then. He, it seems, is in love, and ridiculed by her. Very shameful, and I had just said it was to be. ”

“ But then, ” continued Charlotte, “ I remember once I said to her that I hoped she would never marry Lord Stoketon (because you know people had talked about it) and she was so amusing ! pretended to cut me short—said she did not see why I should hope that—for though Lord Stoketon was a goose, he was rich, and would be a very good match. Was it not droll of her ? ” said she to Miss Dashwood.

Miss Dashwood did think it droll, not of Sophy Grey to hold such an opinion, but that Charlotte Daventry should not be aware that she was repeating what her cousin could not easily forgive her for having said. “ A new hint, ” thought Lady Dowton. “ Sophy tells me, ” said Charlotte, “ that that Mr. Barton you were speaking of was forced into marrying Miss Pemberton ; that they were so anxious, that I believe she quite asked him, and he is very good-natured, so he did not mind. What an odd way that is of making a person marry

one, is not it?" said she, thoughtfully, yet innocently. Frank Crawford smiled and looked at her; and it seemed that Charlotte returned the smile. "Sophy says," continued she, "that Mrs. Pemberton's temper is so bad! Oh! it is so shocking! and that is the reason that her daughter is so anxious to marry, and though I thought it was strange, Sophy assured me that Miss Pemberton positively does not at all like Mr. Barton?"

"Indeed! my dear Charlotte, how entertaining you are!" Lady Dowton got out her writing paper. She could resist no longer. She must put it all down for the edification of her dear friend, whilst it was fresh on her mind—but to write in company was difficult, and, retiring with her letter to her room, she there wrote all the scandal she could to wile away the ennui of her dearest friend's long day.

Miss Dashwoods thought it time to retire with their work, and thus were Frank Crawford and Charlotte Daventry left alone.

"Excellent, Miss Daventry, you have done it well! Lady Dowton is a happily deceived woman!"

"Yes," said Charlotte, laughing. "I saw you smile; I was so near laughing too. It would have spoilt it all; it was very amusing to give her own story back again—all that Sophy had told me was Lady Dowton's absurd scandal. It will all be written in that letter to her dear friend as Sophy's own—the intimate friend of the parties! undoubted authority! and how they will laugh at poor Lady Dowton! About Lord Stoketon too—I did exaggerate a little—but you know that will soon be set right; so it don't matter if the Dashwoods did take it for truth. It is so pleasant to have some one to enter into the fun of such a thing: but Mr. Crawford, do not expose me to your cousin.—I believe I am an odd person, am I not?" said she, throwing up her dark sparkling eyes at him, with an expression that had never yet been seen at Weston.

"Yes," said Frank Crawford, "you are very odd, and it is for that I like you. Yours is not an ordinary character," and Crawford looked at her with admiration: Charlotte turned away, blushed, and then, sitting down to the piano-forte, sung a lively French song, with such grace, such naïveté, such fascinating coquetterie, that Frank Crawford could not resist the charm.

"What a finished coquette," thought he; and he was going to

speaking to her—but she was again the demure, uninteresting Charlotte Daventry—she ceased to play—rose from her seat, and walked out of the room.

We have all of us heard a good deal of circulating libraries—of the circulation of books—the circulation of opinions, and the circulation of knowledge. Doctors talk of irregular circulation, and of sluggish circulation—monied men talk of the circulating medium—statesmen talk of the circulation of sedition,—but more wonderful than all is the circulation of scandal! Its surprising velocity—the additions it gains in its course—the variety of channels through which it passes—the impossibility of impeding its progress surpasses belief! No one has told a scandalous tale—no one ever repeats an ill-natured story—every one makes a point of avoiding all gossip—yet, once afloat, it spreads—it circulates—nothing can conceal it, till all that many thousand-eared monster, the world, have heard and known, and wondered, and been satisfied; and then it falls into a lethargy and dies a natural death. We talk of steam-carriages and rail-ways—and will no one wonder at the power—the velocity of gossip? Will no one write the natural history of gossip?

We must now return to Weston. “My dear Anne,” said Mrs. Grey, at the bottom of the stairs, in a very happy tone, “here is a letter just come; one for me, and one for you, which I have opened. Make haste and come down to answer it. It is from that charming woman Lady Hadley, asking you to go there quite alone—to-morrow, or any day, and to stay as long as you can.”

“How very kind,” said Anne, quietly, as she descended the stairs. “Do you and papa wish me to go?”

“Wish you to go! certainly, my dear; to-morrow by all means. But you know, my dear,” added Mrs. Grey, considerately, as if accounting for Anne’s calmness; “you will be back in time for the Foleys; we will take care of that.”

“Oh! thank you, mama, I was not afraid of that,” said Anne; and she was so quiet that Mrs. Grey was obliged to believe her. “If it was anywhere but Hadley,” thought Anne, “I should be very sorry to go from home. But Lady Hadley is so kind, and I love her so much;” and she smiled sufficiently to please Mrs. Grey, as she sat down to answer the note.

On the morrow Anne went to Hadley : Sophy felt a little envious ; “ I dare say it will be very pleasant,” said she ; “ I wish she had asked me too. I dare say,” after a little pause, “ that Mr. Temple will be there !”

“ Do you think so ?” said Anne, in a very animated tone.

Mrs. Grey was in the room, and she wondered she had not before remembered the barouche-box.

“ He might do as well as George Foley, only Chatterton is so near,” thought Mrs. Grey ; “ and he is not a marrying man ! No,” thought she, “ she must come back for Chatterton, even if they are very anxious to keep her, and she can go again perhaps.”

CHAPTER XXI.

ANNE arrived at Hadley about ten minutes before the dressing-bell had rung. The door was opened for her, and as she walked across the large echoing hall, through the large drawing-room, and saw the tall footman stand with the door held open for her at Lady Hadley's morning-room, she felt that even Hadley was a very formidable place, and that Lady Hadley was a very tremendous person : she thought, perhaps, with a sigh, of her snug room at home, and then walked in. Sophy's predictions were verified ; Mr. Temple was at Hadley, and alone in the room as Anne entered.

I do not know whether Anne looked pleased or not through her blush : I only know that she did blush. She was not sure whether to shake hands, and when Edward Temple held out his, it was held a little time in vain ; however, at last, the hands were shaken, and Edward Temple looked animated, and certainly (as Sir Henry Poynton would have said,) ‘ in a very good humour.’ Anne thought that there was something very delightful in his expression of countenance, and probably her eyes sparkled and her colour brightened, for Edward Temple thought she was certainly very pretty.

“ I am glad to see you here again, Miss Grey,” said he. He saw

that Anne was shy. "I am delighted to see you here. You know," said he, "that I must, for the present, take the character of Lady Hadley. You must endeavour to fancy, for five minutes at least, that you are sitting by Lady Hadley—that she is saying all the civil things on your arrival at her house, and you must say all the proper things in return. You have not yet told me that you are delighted to find yourself here again—that you were afraid you should be too late—that Mrs. Grey desires—what is it? remembrances? love? no, regards is the best word—desires her kind regards, and tells me to thank you for taking me away from her. There, Miss Grey! Is not that exactly what you will have to say to Lady Hadley when she appears? Suppose we rehearse, and then you will be quite perfect? Here am I to personify Lady Hadley! Ah! but here she is herself! Just five minutes too soon. Lady Hadley, Miss Grey," said he, making a bow as Lady Hadley entered. "Here have Miss Grey and I, for the last half hour, been rehearsing all she is to say to you on your entrance."

"What nonsense he talks, Miss Grey, does not he?" said Lady Hadley; and then she far exceeded Mr. Temple's ideas of the cordiality of greeting, for she gave her a kiss, and said, with all that warmth of affection and manner that Anne felt was so charming, how happy she was to have her at Hadley once more.

"There, Lady Hadley!" said Edward Temple, "you dared to say what nonsense I talked! and now, Miss Grey can tell you that the words I used were exactly the same as your own."

As Lady Hadley took Anne up to her room, Anne felt that she was the very dearest woman in the world, and that the visit to Hadley would be very delightful. Perhaps her thoughts extended a little farther, but we have no right to tell tales. Her eyes, it is true, were rather more bright, and the delicate colour on her cheeks a little more decided than usual; and when she was dressed for dinner, and had given herself the last, lingering, 'is all right' look in the glass, she might have said, with perfect truth, that she never saw a more lovely face, a form so light, and so charming a mixture of grace and simplicity.

But Anne Grey said and thought none of this: she only thought as she gave her last look in the glass, as her maid held her gloves for her, and gave an approving glance at her handy-works, "Sup-

pose I should be too late for dinner! I wish I was safely in the room, or that I had Sophy or mama to go down with me!" and her colour heightened as she walked down stairs and passed through the hall.

Her hand was on the drawing-room door—she heard the sound of many voices within, and waited one moment to take breath, till, convinced that courage would not come if she waited an hour, she opened the door. Edward Temple looked up one moment as she entered, and the next was busily talking again to a pretty, as Anne thought (very beautiful girl), seeming perfectly unconscious of the presence of the quiet Anne Grey, whom he had flattered before dinner; and very conscious of the presence, agreeableness, and beauty of the young lady to whom he was talking with such animation.

Lady Hadley was in the room, and to Anne's delight, she saw Miss Trevor—the constant visitor, dear old Miss Trevor! by her she was warmly welcomed, and Lady Hadley instantly made room for her on the sofa, and introduced her to Lady Denham who sat next her.

Lord and Lady Denham and their daughter (the young lady to whom Edward Temple was devoting himself as Anne entered), Miss Trevor, Mr. Oswald, a hunting friend of Lord Hadley's, Mr. and Mrs. Dormer, and a Mr. Hutchinson formed the party at Hadley; not to take into account the dinner visitors who came and went and were forgotten!

Lord and Lady Denham were people of fashion, if I may use that term: 'They were very fine,' as Mrs. Dodson would have said: 'They were very worldly,' as the melancholy half starving country curate would have said: 'They were very entertaining and charming,' as the world would have said of them. Miss Denham, their daughter, was just as exclusive (if that is not an obsolete word) as were her father and mother: very pretty, very brilliant, very accomplished, a little ill-natured, and, as she thought, very clever; perhaps the world would have said, very clever too; for to sum up all, she was very much the fashion!

The rest of the party were ordinary kind of people, whom one meets every day, and never cares whether one meets again or not. Mr. Dormer prosy, Mrs. Dormer blue, Mr. Oswald a thorough fox-hunter, Mr. Hutchinson a quiet, good sort of young man, who had just left college, and tried to be civil and attentive to the ladies, still

looking like a boy, and evidently *géné* by the feeling that he did so. But he was heir to a title and fortune; so he put forth his small pretensions in a small voice; and was tolerated by young ladies when no one preferable was present. He was allowed to engross a little of Miss Denham's attention at odd moments, but was never perceived by her when Mr. Temple was willing to speak, or even sitting within talking distance of her. Such was the party at Hadley.

Anne felt shy, and was very near thinking that even an evening at Hadley could be disagreeable, as she saw Edward Temple devoting himself to the amusement of Miss Denham, talking, laughing with her, and listening to her *exclusive* talking, persuading her to sing, and attending to her song. As this continued during the whole of the first part of the evening, and she never saw him once approaching herself, she actually began to think that even Hadley could be disagreeable.

She saw that she had expected too much, and, I believe, said to herself something very moral, and sensible, though perhaps not very original, about brightest hopes decaying, and the fairest expectations being soonest disappointed; but she was a good quiet girl, and sat so very composedly attending to Miss Trevor, that no one would have supposed, who looked at her placid face, that she was not as happy and contented as she appeared.

She had just given up all idea that Mr. Temple would speak to her that evening, when she found that he had left Miss Denham to be amused by Mr. Hutchinson, as well as she could, and had placed himself near the table at which she was sitting.

She was intent on a new sort of knitting just taught her by Miss Trevor, and became doubly intent as he drew near. But he would not allow the knitting to go on uninterrupted.

"You are very industrious," said he, in a quiet voice; and as Anne raised her head she probably looked pleased, that, at last, he had spoken to her.

"Yes," said she. "I am learning a new kind of work," and she blushed as she thought "what a foolish thing to have said! How silly to tell him that I am learning a new kind of work!"

"Miss Trevor has taught you then, I am sure," said he, in a lower voice, for Miss Trevor was near.

“Yes,” said Anne, smiling.

“I dare say it is very pretty, or very useful then,” continued he. “All ladies’ work is, of course, pretty or useful. One is always assured that it is useful, though it is sometimes difficult to believe it. I hope, Miss Grey,” said he, after a pause, “that you will sing this evening?” and he looked at her for an answer.

“I don’t know,” said Anne, and she felt embarrassed, for she saw that Mr. Temple was still looking at her. It was very strange, but she felt so much less at ease with him than she had formerly done.

“I hope you will sing,” continued he, heedless of the confusion he was making in the knitting. “I have often thought of that song—that one beautiful song! and perhaps,” said he, lowering his voice, and looking at her, “I have often thought of the person who sung it.” He stopped. Anne almost started with surprise and delight. Was this really said to her—was it really meant? or rather, did it mean anything? and a moment’s reflection suggested that he meant to ridicule her. The thought aroused a little indignation, which gave her courage to look up and attempt an answer; she had begun to say, “I am afraid you are laughing at my song,” when she was checked by observing Edward Temple with his eyes still fixed on her face with an expression of earnestness.

She stopped—blushed deeply—said something about being very glad to sing, and turned to Miss Trevor to ask her how her knitting should go on.

Edward Temple remained a few minutes by her side—withdrew his eyes—took up a book, and looked at it, to allow Anne time to recover the alarm which he saw he had excited, but it could not be overcome—the knitting was not so soon to be at an end; so he put down the book, got up, and walked away to join Lady Denham in cheating Lord Hadley at double Patience, to attract Miss Denham to watch ‘mama’s’ Patience, and to be laughing and making others laugh as if the merriest thing in the world were a game at Patience; and Anne finished her work.

But whilst the knitting went on, and in spite of Mr. Oswald’s animated description of ‘a find,’ and an ‘in at the death,’ she thought, and wondered, and wondered and thought; “was it really true? was it a dream that he had said it?” she asked herself, over and

over again ; but he really had said it : she could not misunderstand. It was spoken, though in so low a voice (and Anne thought there never was one so agreeable), yet so distinct and clear that she could not have been mistaken as to the words. No, he certainly had used those words ; but then he might have been in jest ; perhaps he had, but then his look ! no, Anne did not think he could have been, and she would be happy—she would be delighted. She was, in fact, in a flutter of surprise and joy ; yet she scarce knew why, as she again saw Mr. Temple talking and laughing with Miss Denham.

They were seated together on a sofa, rather apart from the players at Patience : Miss Denham had just finished an Italian song which he had admired. “I wonder whether he says the same thing to her?” thought Anne ; and she sighed a very little.

CHAPTER XXII.

THE next day was agreeably spent at Hadley. The Denhams discovered that Anne, though a country girl,—a person whom no one knew, was still a great favourite with Lady Hadley. She was ‘*distinguée*’ and pretty—there was something naïve and interesting about her, and Edward Temple talked to her.

In short, she was just the kind of girl to take up—to rave about. So Miss Denham asked her to practise duets with her : Lady Denham found out a likeness for her to Lady *something somebody* ; made room for her on the sofa, and talked to her in her most agreeable manner for ten minutes at a time ; admired her singing and her gown ; told Lady Hadley within her hearing that she never saw such beautiful hair ! such eyes ! such a skin !—asked Anne if she did not draw as well as she played, and was quite sure she did.

Anne found Miss Denham agreeable and lively, and really enjoyed playing duets with her, for she played well, though she was perhaps more indebted to art than to nature for her musical powers. She had learnt a good style, and that supplied the place of natural feeling

and expression. There was no charm in her performance, but it was brilliant and showy; *she kept her time*, and the duets went on very pleasantly.

Then Anne was made to sing, and Lady Denham and Miss Denham were in raptures; Edward Temple came into the room at the moment. He seated himself very quietly in an arm-chair—took up a book; and whether he read or listened, or did both, Anne could not say; but he did not speak.

When her song was over, Miss Denham asked him to come and sing: she said that she remembered a song of his that she liked so much! It had haunted her ever since.

“I have had it in my head,” said she, “and yet not in enough; and I cannot get it out or in. Do you know that feeling, Miss Grey? You must come and sing it, Mr. Temple, in pity to my head. I shall certainly die of a tune if you do not. Did you ever hear of the poor woman who went into a low nervous fever about a country-dance? No never! How strange! Morning and night the country-dance was hopping, and skipping, and buzzing in her head. To a certain point it always went, over and over again: the same country-dance! But when it came to a certain difficult passage it always stopped. Nothing would make it go on; fingering—counting—nothing would do. That was the melancholy part of it! the doctors tried in vain: if they could only have got over that difficult passage all would have been well! and she would have been cured! But the doctors could not manage it—the difficult passage was not to be overcome, and into a low nervous fever she went. Poor soul! I believe she is dead now! A sad story, Miss Grey,” said she, joining in Anne’s laugh, “but it is all for the sake of arousing Mr. Temple’s pity. Who knows but that I may go into a nervous fever about his song?”

“I shall be very sorry!” said Mr. Temple, in a melancholy voice, and not stirring; “but like the old woman’s head with the country-dance, I can’t get over it! My song and her difficult passage are never to be heard. I deeply regret——”

“No, no, Mr. Temple,” said Miss Denham, interrupting him—“don’t talk of regret; you are very disobliging, is not he, Miss Grey?”

“I suppose I ought to say so,” said Anne, “though I am rather

inclined to take Mr. Temple's part, as I should like so much to follow his example, and never sing but when I like. The example is so good a one," said she, laughing, "that I think I shall follow it."

"It will be a sufficient punishment for my indolence, if you do," said Edward Temple. "Pray do not put your plan in effect," continued he, getting up. "Miss Denham, I am ready to sing a whole music-book full, if you like;" and he began to sing, looking at Anne as he did so; then seeming tired of it, he left the instrument, and walked away to the other end of the room, leaving Miss Denham a little mortified, and a little cross.

However it was all lost upon him, for he was soon too eager in a political discussion with Lord Denham to bestow any more attention on either her or Anne.

"Mr. Temple is very agreeable when he likes," said she, to Anne.

"Yes, very," was the reply, and Anne turned away her head as she spoke.

Nothing remarkable occurred that evening or the next morning. Who has not known the monotony of a country-house? Who has not known that the more comfortable, the more happy, it may be, the fewer events there will be to relate?

But alas!—who has not known its dulness? Who has not known the long morning—the expectation of hearing one o'clock strike, and finding it only twelve? Who has not known the sight of the interminable piece of work, regularly brought down by the lady of the house, the paucity of ideas conveyed with the work—the question "what shall we do to-day? do you like a drive? I am afraid it is rather cold!" which shows you that the hope suggested by the offer is not to be realized—that you are expected not to wish to drive. "You will prefer walking, I dare say: I should like to show you my poultry-house."

It is unluckily a cold, dull day. There has been a copious fall of rain: the leafless trees are dripping—pools of water are standing in the walks, and you must think with delight of the sight of dripping bantams and dirty poultry-houses. But you are saved: the yawning soberness of your morning talk is likely to have no end, for lo! another shower.

"Ah! it rains I see—we shall not stir to day. There is no-

thing so comfortable as sitting in doors at one's work all the morning."

How does the interminableness of that *all morning* strike on your fancy! You are very cold : you look at the fire-place : comfort there, at least, you think : but the fire is scarcely blazing. The lady of the house sees you cast a longing look towards the grate : she obligingly hopes you are not too warm.

"I don't think we have too much fire, have we? It was so hot this morning. I ordered them not to make such large fires;" and you resign yourself to the knowledge that the care all day will be to keep the room at freezing point. Oh! who has not known all this and many more of the charms of a long day in a country house!

Anne Grey felt none of these annoyances. Hadley was proverbially pleasant. There was always plenty to do—to think of—to talk of, and to see :—the day was always too short—the clock struck one when twelve was expected.

One so often hears that such and such a house is 'so pleasant,' and such and such another 'so dull.' From what does this proceed? Can no one tell? The same people are met with at both the dull and the pleasant house :—the owners may not be peculiarly agreeable :—the house may not be particularly good, or pretty, or well-furnished—no peculiar beauty out of doors—no peculiar beauty within. In short, no one knows why it is; yet such and such houses always are pleasant, and this was the case with Hadley, and it certainly was not the house or the place, the visitors, or even the owner that made it so. Lord Hadley, though an excellent man, was not particularly entertaining; and though, it is true, that Lady Hadley was a charming woman; yet how many charming women there are who have dull houses!

There must, we suppose, exist a peculiar art for parties at home. We wish that those few who possess it, who have studied (if they do study) it, and have been successful, would give their knowledge to the world. It would be an act of praiseworthy benevolence.—How grateful should we feel towards those who had saved us from the long tedium of the dull days in our excellent neighbours' houses! A monument would be raised to their memory when dead, or a statue erected to their praise when living; inscribed with the

warmest gratitude and veneration, from the distressed ladies and gentlemen of country life, to the greatest benefactors of any age or time.

But we must return to Anne Grey, and her enjoyment of the pleasant house at Hadley; and so much did she enjoy it that she felt she should even be sorry to return home.

Mr. Temple had been very agreeable. They had had a great deal of conversation together, and Anne always forgot her shyness in talking to him. He seemed interested in hearing her opinions, and anxious to draw them forth, and he never but once again said anything which made her consider whether he could be speaking seriously, or secretly ridiculing her.

Once more only did he make her start, and feel happy, and fearful, and doubtful. One evening he had left Miss Denham, after she had been exerting her best powers for his amusement,—he left her, to come and sit by Anne. They had talked for long on various subjects, and at length they spoke of memory—of the power of recollecting faces—of identifying in the grown-up person the child that had been known at school,—of remembering those who had been seen but once.

“There are some people I feel it would be impossible to forget,” said Edward Temple. “I do not mean those whom one remembers merely for amusement; who strike one only from their absurdity; I mean those whom one remembers to love.—Yes,” said he, after a slight pause, and looking towards Anne, “there are some people whom I never could forget. Do not flatter yourself, Miss Grey, that you will ever be forgotten.”

The colour came into Anne’s face—her heart beat fast as she quickly withdrew her eyes. She felt that those words would never be forgotten. Perhaps they never were.

It was only this once more that anything was said to cause her, in the retirement of her chamber, to wonder, and be delighted—and to think “it really was,” and then “it never could be”—nothing but this to make her stand for minutes over the fire, wondering why her maid delayed so long, and to find at last that it was she who had kept her maid in waiting and suspense:—nothing to make her look all round the room for her gloves, to find that they were both on her hands:—nothing to make her ask if Mr. Temple was gone

down instead of Lady Hadley. No—there were but two slight occasions to make Anne do all this; to make her sometimes go into a reverie—sometimes smile in the middle of her reverie—sometimes give a little joyous bound in her light, noiseless step across the room. But there was daily just enough to make her late in coming up to dress, early in going down to breakfast, and to make her say to herself, “How very early we come to bed at Hadley!” Yes—there was just enough for this in Edward Temple’s manner.

“He is certainly more agreeable than ever,” thought Anne. “He talks more seriously to me; as if he thought my opinions worth hearing, and considered me worthy to be told his own! He certainly talks a great deal to Miss Denham,”—Anne sighed a little; “but I do not think as he does to me. He always seems amused with her, and as if he were willing to amuse her: but it is different! I should not wish his manner to be the same with me! Yes—I think, after all, that he does like me the best! But how conceited!” thought she. “How presumptuous! No, I dare say he prefers her, and the difference of manner is a proof in her favour. He would probably wish to put forth all his powers of entertainment for me, as he does for her, if he did not think me too dull to understand him. I was very conceited,” thought Anne. “I wonder whether he says he never could forget her? I dare say he does.” And she went down stairs looking very sedate and diffident; but the moment she entered, Edward Temple left Miss Denham to come and talk to her, and at the end of half-an-hour’s serious conversation, Anne Grey entertained once more those same conceited opinions.

“It is a pity how the world spoils people!” says the country cousin, who longs to go to town. “It’s a pity how wordy people are!” says the discontented, philosophical fellow of a college, as he throws on one side my book, which Heaven knows how he had ever been deluded into opening!

CHAPTER XXIII.

ANNE could not think of leaving Hadley without regret, and though she had stayed two days longer than was first intended, yet the five days seemed to have passed as quickly as if they had only been three.

Anne regretted the loss of Lady Hadley's society. She had been peculiarly kind : she had talked to her with such affectionate interest, and seemed anxious that Anne should regard her as a friend.

"I hope you will often come to Hadley," said she, one day. "Now we are got so far in our intimacy, we must not stop here and have to begin again. As long as you remain at Weston, you must remember how near it is to Hadley; and afterwards, when my little friend is no longer Anne Grey, you must not forget that you had some friends before you changed your name," said she, smiling, and looking affectionately at her.

Anne blushed, looked grateful, and said all that was natural and proper about her never forgetting Lady Hadley—and never being likely to change her name.

"Oh, yes," said Lady Hadley, "all girls form a virtuous resolution to be old maids, from sixteen to five-and-twenty; it is all very right : nevertheless I hope to see you married before a great many years have passed. There even is a person," continued she, "whom I should have almost liked for you—but then alas! he is unfortunately not a marrying man! If he could once make up his mind to seriously attach himself, he would make an excellent husband. However, it is out of the question, so I would say to all my young lady friends, 'beware of Edward Temple!' I think I must give a little advice to Miss Denham. But what a long lecture on marriage I have been giving you!" said she, smiling and rising as she spoke. "I must make haste and show that I have respect enough for its *convenances* by attending my own husband who is waiting for me all this time!"

Anne had been rather surprised, and a little vexed, by what Lady Hadley had said of Mr. Temple. Still she believed it was partly said in jest, and that no particular allusion to her had been intended. She hoped Lady Hadley could not fancy her so conceited as to suppose Mr. Temple in love with her. She hoped she did not think her manner with him had been forward. One thing however was certain—Mr. Temple was not a marrying man; and she left Hadley with this conviction on her mind, but with a conviction, no less strong, that another so agreeable a person did not exist in the world.

The visit to Chatterton was to take place the day after Anne's return, and she had some anticipations of pleasure, though leaving home again so soon, for Mr. Temple was to be there : but there were still warmer anticipations of happiness in returning home even after so short an absence. Yet in that solitary drive from Hadley, Charlotte Daventry's words often came across her mind. She thought of Lady Hadley and of Edward Temple—of Sophy and of her mother : she felt that Charlotte might be right : there were different appreciations of her character ; but she checked the thought, and when the carriage door was opened and she found herself again at home—felt her mother's fond kiss—her father's affectionate embrace—saw Sophy's glad look—heard William's hearty, " Well Miss Anne ! we are all very glad to have you again, " she forgot Charlotte Daventry, and if she remembered her words, it was only to say they were false.

" I am, and I ought to be satisfied—more than satisfied, with such love ! only a few days absent, and welcomed as if I had been away for months ! "

" Dear, dear home ! How I love you ! " ejaculated she to herself as she put off her bonnet and shawl. She had forgotten all in that warm and pure delight—that love for those who made her home ! She who added a charm to her father's house ; she whose gentle voice, whose never failing cheerfulness, contentment, elegance and sense, lent to domestic hours their peace and joy—she forgot all but her home : forgot that she had a wish, a hope, on earth beyond. She forgot the world—its troubles—its joys—forgot even Edward Temple ; and not till she had sat half an hour alone with Charlotte Daventry the next morning, did she remember that even at home there were sorrows and cares, and that reasons might exist to seek pleasures and forgetfulness elsewhere ; and, as she prepared

for Chatterton, she found that she could leave home with less of fond regret than she would perhaps have wished to feel.

But she would not allow herself to repine : she turned her thoughts to the contemplation of enjoyment now in her power. She thought that society had its pleasures, and that it was right to appreciate and enjoy them ; and if the knowledge that Edward Temple was to be at Chatterton added not a little to her amiable spirit of contentment, do not let us think that she deserved no praise, because pleasure mingled with her duty. The path of duty need not always be painful and rugged ; yet though it is sometimes spread with flowers—though gleams of sunshine sometimes gild its gloom, yet even from this flowery path we often turn aside with disgust and negligence, because we are unwilling to tread in the steps pointed out to us. This should not be—nor should we deem the duties of others always light and easy, because they are not devoid of everything pleasing to recommend them. We may admire the being whom we see struggling in the narrow path of duty with no ray of gladness to cheer him on—let us admire, reverence, respect ! but, let us not for this refuse all admiration to the being who continues in the same path of duty with more of joy to cheer his steps. He likewise deserves our praise ; and even so may we look with approbation on the quiet contentedness of Anne Grey. We may praise her that she determined to find happiness in every event, and in every situation in which Providence had placed her.

There is, it is true, and how gladly do we feel that there is, a real pleasure arising from the consciousness that we are performing our duty. Yes ! though the brightness of Anne's smile had faded, though there was almost a touch of sadness in the calmness of her countenance, yet when, the confidential conversation ended, she and Charlotte Daventry quitted the room together, who would not rather have been that unrepining being, more sad, it is true, than she had hitherto been, than her whose lip was curled in triumph, on whose face a smile dwelt for a moment ? Who would not rather at that moment as they saw the victim, and the deceiver—as they gazed on the proud smile, which curled the lip, and lighted up the dark expressive eyes of the one—and saw the tear which filled the clear blue eye of the other—who would not rather so have wept with Anne, than so have smiled with Charlotte ?

Sophy was in high spirits at the thoughts of going to Chatterton. She loved society, and society returned the compliment. Contrary to all rules of etiquette, Mr. and Mrs. Grey were taking out three young ladies at once; nothing could be so wrong, and Mrs. Grey would never have ventured on the display of so much beauty and agreeableness at once, had not Mr. Foley rode over on purpose to beg that it might be so.

“Chatterton would be so highly honoured! Chatterton was quite large enough! a perfect desert in size! Really it was impossible to fill it! Mrs. Grey must grant his little request.” Mrs. Grey was exceedingly shocked, quite distressed, and quite delighted. Mr. Foley went away quite satisfied that every one of the family would come, though it would be so distressing to poor Mrs. Grey’s feelings; and Mrs. Grey said, when he left the room, “Mr. Foley is a particularly agreeable gentlemanlike person!” and as she saw the three young ladies in the carriage with her, she bore her sufferings so well, that she actually looked nearly as happy as when she saw Lord Stoketon at the ball, or had completed her largest piece of tent-stitch.

“It would have been so hard to have left poor Charlotte at home,” thought she; “and yet I would not have left Anne, for I am sure George Foley admires her, and Chatterton is such a very nice place! Mr. Foley said it was so large, it really could not be filled; but however with a large young family, and Sophy’s children, who might stay there whilst she came to Weston; and William perhaps,—in a little time I hope, though I don’t know yet who he may have fixed upon; and Charlotte, Mrs. Robert Dodson—Yes! Mr. Foley would find it would not be at all too large—but then he would be dead, poor man!” And Mrs. Grey comfortably reposed in the corner of the carriage on her way to Chatterton, looking, worthy woman, to future happiness, in the delightful contemplation of her charming host’s decease, to whom she wished no ill on earth—merely that he should make room for his son.

Mrs. Grey never thought of wishing beyond the common course of nature, but she certainly forgot that Mr. Foley was a little younger than herself!

Amongst the party at Chatterton, were Frank Crawford, Mr. and Mrs. Cartwright, Mr. Arthur Dalton, Mr. Temple, Lady Downton —

(Sir John was in Leicestershire for a happy fortnight), and Sir Henry Poynton, who was always everywhere.

How is it some people always are everywhere? Everybody meets them—everybody is surprised that you should have met them, though no one is surprised to meet them themselves. Everybody met Sir Henry Poynton, and no one started or looked surprised when they walked into the drawing-room before dinner to see Sir Henry's hale, hearty figure, ready with his extended hand to greet them.

There were others at Chatterton not amongst our old acquaintances, and justice to Mr. Foley demands that we mention a Duchess Dowager, and an Ex-minister among the number; but we have so often gone through the labelling process, that it is time to follow the example of those authors of more interesting books, who dare not touch on the inexpressible feelings of the hero or heroine. Such feelings, as our novelists tell us, are more easily imagined than described. We doubt the assertion, but we adopt this plan, with regard to the Chatterton visitors, and leave them all to the brilliant fancy of the reader.

Whether the presence of any of these visitors added to the agreeableness of the first evening, I cannot say; but it certainly did not diminish the pleasure George Foley experienced in the society of Anne, nor that which Anne felt in the conversation of Edward Temple.

"He is perfect!" whispered Charlotte Daventry to Anne, as they separated at the top of the stairs; "and perhaps he thinks Anne Grey perfect!" added she, with an arch smile, as she pressed the small white fingers that were reposing in happy confidence in hers. Anne could only smile and say 'good night,' as with a light step she followed Sophy to her room.

"Yes," thought she, "he is perfect."

"What a cold-mannered girl Miss Foley is!" said Sophy, interrupting Anne's charitable train of thought.

"No," said she, at length, as if she had been deliberating on the question of Miss Foley's coldness.

"No?" said Sophy, looking up surprised, and pausing, as she unclasped her bracelets. "No? why, Anne, you are half asleep!"

"Oh! am I?" said Anne, recollecting herself. "No, I am not sleepy—but I forgot—what was it you asked?"

“ Ah ! just so, ” said Sophy, laughing : “ that *no*, I was quite sure was the answer to a question in your own mind—‘ Is Mr. George Foley handsome or not ? ’ and ‘ no, ’ says Miss Anne Grey ! ”

“ Mr. George Foley ! ” said Anne, with a tone of surprise ; “ no indeed, Sophy, I was not thinking of him. ”

“ Oh then, I know ! It was Sir Henry Poynton ? ”

“ No, not even of him, ” said Anne. “ How pretty Charlotte looked this evening, ” added she, after a moment’s pause. “ Once I looked at her, when she was talking to Mr. Crawford, and I never saw anything more striking than her expression. She has beautiful eyes ! ”

“ She is ‘ *belle comme le jour*, ’ ” said Sophy, “ and, to speak the truth, with all her childishness, a little bit of a flirt. ”

“ No, no, that is not fair, Sophy : Charlotte has no idea of flirting ; she is perfectly simple ! ”

“ And so naïve and simple, ” said Sophy, “ that she has won the admiration of Mr. Crawford, who, by the way, I do not quite like. ”

Anne did not continue the conversation—she was thinking of Charlotte Daventry’s manner at that moment ; of a smile that she had seen given and returned between her and Mr. Crawford.

“ After all, I do not think Mr. Temple is so very agreeable, ” said Sophy, after a little silence.

Anne’s attention was not so far absent as on a former occasion ; it was immediately aroused by Sophy’s remark. It called forth no reply ; but there succeeded a quick rush of colour to her face, and a diligent search for a ring which she had not dropped.

The morrow was one of those bright and sunny days, which always betoken in a work of fiction either some heavy calamity to the hero and heroine, or a sympathetic piece of brilliant fortune. I can scarcely say which of the two it betokened to Anne and Sophy Grey. It seemed unmarked by any peculiar event, whether of joy or sorrow, to them ! Yet through the world did not both exist—was there not joy and sorrow on that day ? In every hour, in every moment, joy and sorrow to millions ?

Yes ! on each day that calls us back to life and light, all around us the mingled web is wove. The many rise, like us—the many weep, or smile, or laugh, and feel. Could we but see and know,

what a mass of varied misery and joy would meet our scrutiny ! What feelings in those many hearts ! What fear, what joy, what hope ! What bright realities ! What dark forebodings ! What fluttering hearts ! What fond, gay visions ! There are tears for those departed ; there are watchings round the dying man—there are last words spoken—there are death struggles—there are murders—there are treacheries fulfilled—there are words spoken like daggers to the heart—there are secrets told that blight—there are young hearts awoke to grief.

Yes, but there are smiles called forth—there are hopes fulfilled, sweet words whispered, sweet sounds heard ; there are parents' smiles, and parents' tears of joy ; there are children's grateful hearts poured forth ; there are children who have watched, and loved, and been rewarded ; there are suspicions quelled—doubts that are hushed—mysteries unravelled ; there are those who enter upon life, blessed, welcomed, and caressed ; there are calm and holy deaths. Yes, all around us, joy and sorrow, are busy in their work !

But let us turn again to our homely scene. Let us turn to the minutiae, the servile copyism of our Dutch school of portraiture. Let us dip our brush in gay and vivid hues, and paint with careful hand the little world of social life around us. Let us be clear, minute, distinct ; and now, with steady touch, and watchful eye, we prepare our colours ; then select and blend.

The morning sun has brought to light the leafless trees of Chatterton—the frost has disappeared—the air breathes mild and soft—a touch of spring is there—the rooks are up—they are spread abroad, now hovering over the open lawn, now uttering their busy notes—then resting on the ground, walking with strutting industry along the grass ; now up and away again, with a cheerful caw. The mist is gone :—the sun streams forth ; and the bare branches glitter with the dew drops still hanging on the trees. The sun shines forth : it streams in through the latticed cottage window : it streams in through the curtained window of the rich. It streams in to the large spacious rooms at Chatterton, and wakes Sophy and Anne Grey, to the sweet consciousness of being.

“What a lovely day !” said Anne, as she put aside the curtain. “It is almost like spring ! It will be a beautiful day for our drive ;” and her face brightened with a happy smile.

Why was Anne so happy? Was it the lovely day alone? No, not quite; for though a spring-like day will sometimes give a spring-like feeling to the heart; though a bright sun will give a sunshiny feeling to the mind; yet it was not this alone. Anne thought, as she saw the sun so bright, that the open carriage would be put in requisition: that there would be a place in it for herself, and (shall we say it?) for Edward Temple!

Anne heard the cawing of the rooks, saw the clear blue sky, the light grey, purple, and yellow tints of the clouds all blending, intermingling, and gently moving forward in the soft mild breeze; and the sun-light brightness was reflected on her cheek—the softness and the gladness was repeated in her eyes: and the beating of her heart! was that as gentle as the whispering freshness of the morning breeze?

Oh! Anne Grey, how is it that I write this of you? “What nonsense!” you would have said; and your pretty rosy lips would have looked, “what nonsense!” and even your soft blue eyes would have expressed with a quiet contempt, “what nonsense!”—and perhaps it is nonsense for an every-day common-place story like mine.

CHAPTER XXIV.

“Miss Anne Grey, here is a place, Sir Henry Poynton has been religiously preserving for you,” said Mr. Temple, showing her a vacant seat between himself and Sir Henry at breakfast. Anne took the offered seat, and for one second at least was unable to reply to Sir Henry Poynton’s “Good morning.”

“You have been very idle this morning,” said Sir Henry, with a good-humoured smile on his weather-beaten face. “I have had great difficulty to keep a chair for you. I could not have managed it had not Temple helped me:—“Ah! Temple,” added he, speaking across Anne to Mr. Temple, “I was telling Miss Grey how cleverly you managed. I am telling her that I am indebted to you for the honour of having her here by me.”

“Miss Grey, perhaps, is not indebted to me for one part of the manœuvre,” said he, turning quickly round, and looking at Anne. “She might have been placed between two people who were agreeable to her, instead of one; but it is difficult to be unselfish at all times.” The sentence was finished in a low voice to Anne: she alone heard it.

“But I was saying,” continued Sir Henry to Anne, “how idle you were this morning. There was Miss Daventry up with the lark.”

“Yes, I see she is blushing,” said he, looking jocose, and nodding to her across the table. We must lay it to the infirmity of his vision, that he spoke of blushes which had no existence.

“Ah! I see she is blushing: and well she may. She will not hear, so I may say what I like,” continued he, in a particularly audible, confidential voice. “There I found her actually having a tête-à-tête with a young gentleman, when I came down, thinking myself an excellent man because I was so early; there I found her already seated in an arm-chair, and Mr. Crawford in another. Ah! Miss Daventry,” smiling and nodding at her, as at last he caught her eye, “I am telling tales. I am telling a little story of you!”

“Not a short one, I should suppose,” said Frank Crawford, half aloud, to Charlotte Daventry, who sat by him.

“Yes! it’s very true: Miss Grey can tell you all about it!”

Sir Henry chuckled, Charlotte laughed, looked very innocent, said, “Oh, what is it?” and then the joke was over, and Anne could listen to a voice on the other side of her.

“Your cousin is a very natural character,” said Mr. Temple, with a scrutinizing look, as she answered,

“Yes, perfectly?”

“I see you think so!” was his reply. Anne did not like his tone as he uttered these words: but he immediately turned the subject from Charlotte Daventry; and as Anne listened and replied, she soon forgot Charlotte, Mr. Crawford, Sir Henry Poynton, everything but—Anne Grey, I must not be so unkind towards you—no—not by me shall that modest shrinking delicacy be wounded, by having its thoughts, its feelings, and its weaknesses displayed to the cold, unfriendly eye of the world. No, let the modest retirement of character remain unexposed. Let it lie hidden and beau-

tiful in its retirement—shrinking like the violet amidst its leaves from the notice, the pollution, and the contamination of the world.

“Who is for a drive this morning?” said Mr. Foley. “Or rather is any not for one on such a day? Quite the sort of day,” said he, turning to the Dowager Duchess of———who sat contentedly on his right hand, “to make one hate the sight of ottomans and sofas, and regret one has been at the expense of heated flues—new invented stoves etc. ‘*La belle nature*,’ is every thing to-day! one is quite disgusted with stoves, and rugs, and Axminster carpets.”

“Are you, really?” said the good simple duchess. “I think they are very comfortable; but, I dare say, it will be very pleasant for a drive.”

“Oh! then we will certainly have one:” then, raising his voice and making a general appeal to the company, said, “the Duchess and I are engaged for a drive. Who will join our party? Temple,” continued he, addressing him across the table, “I have something to show you. I have a carriage that will amuse you! and to tell you the truth, I have a design upon you; you are to drive in it to-day—it is a whim of Mrs. Foley’s. She fell in love with it at—where was it?—oh, Cheltenham—she thought it would be exactly the thing for her charitable expeditions. I believe, good enthusiastic woman, she would have bought one out of the stand if I would have let her—but that would not do! so I sent to the fellow in Long-acre that builds me my carriages, and he took the pattern;—and this is the carriage you must all admire.”

Temple looked amused and acquiescent, and then turning to Anne, “Will you make my duties light,” he said, in a low voice; “will you promise to drive with me? Miss Anne Grey,” said he, raising his voice and addressing Mr. Foley, “has promised to be miserable for a whole morning’s drive with me. We are both victims: you must collect your others as you can. I leave that to your powers of persuasion, Foley.”

“Oh! I am quite a willing victim!” said Mrs. Cartwright, “and is there room for another person?”

“Yes, actually,” said Mr. Foley, with mock gravity, “there is room for four in Mrs. Foley’s fly.”

“Oh! then, there must be another victim!” cried Mrs. Cartwright, “who must it be?”

“I am another most willing victim—most humble slave!” said Mr. Arthur Dalton, trying to look comic and insinuating at once; “Most humble slave!” Who ever saw Arthur Dalton, but felt how thoroughly those words belonged to him! Edward Temple smiled, looked at Anne, and saw she understood him.

“How easily the chain sits on some people!” said he. “Surely some English were born un-English! Happy, humble man! Do not you envy him?”

The drive was to take place. Everybody was to go, and it was to be charming, “a real gipsy expedition,” as Mr. Foley said. Every one was to be happy, and they were to see the ruins of a castle, and a Roman *something*—no one knew what; but it was decidedly Roman, though it looked like a real English heap of soil and the remains of a real English wall. Still it was quite worth going to see.

“Do not you feel quite inspired, Miss Foley?” said Mr. Temple. “Do not you feel a noble enthusiasm rising, and the spirit of improvising coming upon you? Cannot you fancy some one of the party—Mr. Dalton, perhaps—a Roman patriot!—look at him, Miss Foley!”

Miss Foley and others who stood near smiled as their eyes followed the form of the Roman patriot reclining in an arm-chair, fondling Mrs. Foley’s lap-dog, and looking sweet and laughing in affected merriment with Mrs. Cartwright.

Mr. Foley had arranged the party. Edward Temple was, after all, not to go in the fly. George must take his place—the joke was over, and Mr. Temple must go with Lady Emily Harville and the Duchess. Mr. Foley had made up his mind that it should be so, and no one could rebel against his decisions in his own house. George Foley thought it much the best arrangement, and when Mr. Foley appealed to her, Anne said so also, whilst George Foley listened to hear how willing she was to have him for a companion.

Perhaps Anne did not know that Mr. Temple was within hearing when she agreed with Mr. Foley, and looked as much pleased as George Foley wished. “He was very willing to give it up,” thought she, “after having asked me to go with him!”

Some people might have said that Edward Temple was out of

humour. Perhaps he was; but he was a good-tempered man. "What airs that man gives himself!" thought Mr. Arthur Dalton. "I wish I could get his tone and manner."

"Parties of pleasure are proverbially parties of pain," said Edward Temple, a few minutes afterwards, to Mr. Grey, who was near him. "I am sure you must agree in thinking that no bore is equal to that of being forced to be delighted for a whole day together, with nothing to make one so, except doing the very thing one don't like."

"I agree so perfectly," said Mr. Grey, "that I shall beg off. I am old, you know," smiling; "so I can get out of these difficulties easily—that is one privilege of being an old married man!"

"I cannot claim your privilege, but I intend to follow your example. But perhaps you will do a good-natured thing and take my place at the side of Lady Emily? She is a charming person, as Foley will tell you."

"Oh! I thought," said Mr. Grey, smiling, "that you were of the Foley fly party?"

"Oh, no! that is at an end. Miss Anne Grey would not accept of me as a companion, so I am doomed to make the disagreeable to the Duchess and Lady Emily. They must suffer for my mortified vanity."

"Anne," said Mr. Grey, as she passed near him to look for a book, "do you know what Mr. Temple says of you? I hear you refused to drive with him;" said he laughing, and gently drawing his daughter towards him.

"Oh, no!" said Anne, a little embarrassed, "I did not refuse; I believe it was Mr. Temple who refused to drive with me;" and she blushed for having said what she felt.

Some people profess to say whatever comes into their heads, and to be so natural that they cannot help it; and from those we may always expect to hear either many rude and ill-natured things, or a great deal of nonsense: we may be quite sure that the regular professor of this charming *naïveté* is either very silly, or very malicious.

Anne Grey made no professions of being under the dreadful necessity of uttering her thoughts aloud. She had neither the artifice of being unnatural, nor of striving to seem natural. She was perfectly

without artifice : her heart was filled with truth, sincerity, charity, and kindness : she had no disguise ; and if she sometimes said that which etiquette might have blushed at for etiquette's sake, she never breathed one single word which good taste or good feeling would have shrunk from expressing. She, in fact, said all which those who profess to be natural have heard, and thought so beautiful that they would imitate it. Fatal mistake ! to try to imitate the most inimitable of all graces ! But to Anne nature had given this artless charm, and nature, like a kind mother, had blinded her alone to the knowledge of its possession. Some will say, ' where is the envied charm of those few words which fell from her lips ? ' Yet had any one seen and heard her at the moment I describe, when, as she uttered those words she leant against her father's chair and put her hand upon his shoulder, they would have acknowledged that a peculiar charm did exist.

" Then you will not refuse to accept my services once more ? " said Edward Temple, looking at her with animation. " You will let me be useful to the best of my abilities in driving away the dulness of a long drive ? in putting on your cloak for you when it is slipping off—in opening gates if we have no half dozen grooms on curveting steeds behind us, which Heaven knows whether Foley would ever forgive me for supposing there would not be ? " Anne smiled, and the pleasure betrayed in her smile satisfied Edward Temple without waiting for any other reply.

" Then I will arrange it all ! " said he, his ill-humour gone. " Mr. Grey, what do you say to Lady Emily and the Duchess ? any wish ? It is the last time of asking, remember, for I am going to decide their fates irrevocably in a few minutes. No ? Ah, Mr. Grey ! can you also resist such charms ? Rank, beauty, and fashion ! Well then, Miss Grey, I have your consent ? may I say ? "

" Yes, " said Anne.

" Then, George Foley, you are doomed to a Duchess and Lady Emily for a drive, or for life ! "

Edward Temple had soon arranged it, and as poor George Foley looked at the happy radiant face of Anne when Edward Temple returned to her, he could only confess to himself how little happy he felt ! At that moment he would have liked the privilege of hating Edward Temple. But he forbade the thought. He had strong

feelings, but he had a strong control over them. He might be grieved, but he need not be unamiable ; and as he saw Anne's look of pleasure he only felt the chill of disappointment ; and if he envied Edward Temple's powers of fascination, shall we blame him ?

No ! let the young lady who wishes she possessed the beauty of her preferred rival—let the starving artist who wishes himself gifted with the talent of his distinguished fellow labourer—let the poor neglected child, who wishes that on herself were bestowed some of the caresses lavished on her more favoured brother or sister—let these plead for him, and let us also acquit him for coveting Edward Temple's power of captivating the heart of Anne Grey.

CHAPTER XXV.

THE drive took place : Mrs. Foley's fly was pronounced to be the most charming fly that ever came out of coachmaker's hands : the Roman remains were admired and apostrophized : Mr. Arthur Dalton looked as like a Roman patriot as he was expected to look ; and the day, though in scarcely a spring month, was yet exactly like spring, and exactly suited for a gipsy party ;—the carriages that might have been closed were thrown open ; and no one pitied the ' poor wretches,' in Mrs. Foley's open fly.

No ! every one might have envied them. Some perhaps did ! and did Anne Grey think she deserved to be envied ? Did she think it such a very charming drive ? Oh yes ! and Mrs. Cartwright and Mr. Arthur Dalton ! they liked it also. Edward Temple perhaps thought it charming too—Yes ! and perhaps in that drive much interesting conversation passed between himself and Anne. But we must rest on conjecture alone : it may have been nothing new or entertaining.

Perhaps Edward Temple spoke of the world—of his dislike of worldly people—his admiration of those who were not ? Perhaps he insinuated, that he never saw a being so unworldly as Anne Grey !

never knew one whose slightest contamination by the world it would grieve him so deeply to see. Perhaps he said how easily the world would spoil, and harden, and sully even the purest, the most simple-minded. Perhaps he warned Anne to beware—perhaps for *his sake* to beware; and (flattering reason) because she *was* the purest, the most simple-minded, and because of the grief it would cause him to see the slightest change in such a character. Perhaps Anne felt that the world might easily spoil—that it might change many—that it might change her in many things; still in one thing it never could change her! She never could forget Edward Temple.

But will he who mingles in this wicked, spoiling world—who *has* long mingled in it—will he forget—will he have said, and looked, and insinuated all this, merely for the amusement of the moment? Will he in a few short days be saying the self-same words—looking with the self-same looks at some other poor deluded, flattered girl? Will he perhaps remember her merely to think “hers was a pretty interesting character—an amusing study for an idle half hour?” Yes, perhaps it will be so; perhaps all this was said and felt, and thought. But I do not say that it was, or that it will be.

All I dare tell is, that when the party safely returned to Chatterton, just in time for dressing, Anne Grey looked very happy. She said it had been a very delightful drive, and the most charming carriage in the world. Edward Temple handed her out with almost more than necessary care, hoped she was not tired, in an anxious (perhaps, we may say), in a tender voice; and said, when the expedition was spoken of that evening, that it had been very pleasant, and that nothing would be so delightful as another drive,—“if any more Roman ruins could be found—any Roman pig-styes; the Romans certainly must have had pigs—and they must have built them styes.”

“Certainly,” said Lady Dowton, who sat next him. “Certainly. I wish my health would allow; but I am such a poor, weak, creature, that I lose all these pleasures!”

“Yes, indeed,” said Mr. Temple, compassionately. “You cannot, I fear, look at Roman pig-styes.”

“Ah no!” said Lady Dowton. She was not quite sure whether Mr. Temple pitied her or not. Poor Lady Dowton! she was quite right not to be too certain.

“Does not Lady Dowton rather amuse you?” said Edward Temple to Anne, one evening at Chatterton.

“I have known her so long,” said Anne, “that the amusement is almost at an end.”

“I can easily imagine that. To me it is all new; dear, good Mrs. Foley’s unavoidable, and Lady Dowton’s avoidable, bad health, and interesting delicacy of mind and body go on so well together—they clash delightfully.”

And so it was. It may be supposed that the characteristics of Lady Dowton and Mrs. Foley bore so great a similitude that it was impossible they should agree; but in justice to Mrs. Foley it must be said that all unpleasant feelings arising from their too great sympathy, were felt only by Lady Dowton. Mrs. Foley was exceedingly sorry for poor Lady Dowton, and I verily believe had often the tears in her eyes for her. But still they could not help clashing, for in the one there was the affectation of delicate health and sensibility; in the other the reality. To be ill, weak, nervous, and sensitive, was Lady Dowton’s ambition—her delight. To be sensitive and weak in mind and body was poor Mrs. Foley’s misfortune, and upon this she was so far from congratulating or priding herself, that she never could have imagined any other person doing so; and with all the heart that could be spared from the claims of her hundred cousins, she really pitied poor Lady Dowton.

No wonder that Lady Dowton should dislike her, in spite of her pity, when she saw that she really possessed all the enviable delicacy and sensibility to which she aspired. Her affected maladies, and Mrs. Foley’s real ones were at endless variance; so, in spite of Mrs. Foley’s ready tear, and though she always called her ‘poor Lady Dowton,’ and ‘poor thing,’ Lady Dowton talked of Mrs. Foley’s indolence; wished, with many a sigh, that she possessed her good health, and said how shocking it was when people gave way so terribly to fancied evils.

“My dear Lady Dowton,” said Mrs. Foley, that evening, as her ladyship was eagerly listening to a quite new, very scandalous story, with all the freshest *on dit*’s detailed by Lady Caroline Fullerton, “my dear Lady Dowton, I am sure you must be tired to death by all this talking. Your health, I know, is so much like mine—I am sure this noise is quite too much for us. Do come with me

into my little snugery, where we shall be quite quiet, and you must really lie down a little."

It was said in such a kind, compassionate voice, that Lady Dowton was obliged to seem languid, to leave the delightful piece of scandal, and to follow Mrs. Foley.

"You are quite right, Mrs. Foley," said Edward Temple, "to take Lady Dowton away. You are quite right, Lady Dowton," said he, in a confidential tone. "When once Lady Caroline begins to tell little stories of her dear friends, there is really no end of it; none but the *strongest* nerves could bear it."

Lady Dowton tried not to frown, and to walk away with a relieved and contented air from the possibility of hearing what she would have given everything in the world to hear.

"Poor woman!" said Edward Temple, smiling at Anne, and seating himself by her as Lady Dowton withdrew. "It was almost too cruel! I half repented when I saw her look of agony, as I mentioned the interminable gossip."

"It was very cruel," said Anne, laughing. "Would it not be kind to call her back again?"

"No, no! that is a very charitable idea!" said he, "but my fit of remorse is over. I am much too happy here to allow of its continuance. A hundred Lady Downtons should not take me away!" and then, as he saw Anne look embarrassed by something too impressive in his manner, he added, "no! a hundred Lady Downtons should not take me away from Lady Caroline's newest scandal!" and he was so eager to hear it that he talked to Anne the whole time it was going on.

The next day was showery. No drives could be thought of on such a day. Towards evening it altered; the sun shone out before it set, but the ground was so wet that few of the party thought of stirring from the house. Two however of the number did venture forth together, and their voices might be heard as they turned the angle of the fir grove, and emerged in the long wide gravel walk, some distance from the house.

These two adventurous people were Charlotte Daventry and Frank Crawford. They walked slowly; perhaps Charlotte Daventry, a young and timid girl, such as we know her to be, wished to shake off her companion's attendance, and purposely chilled herself to

make him feel that it would be more for his comfort to walk alone. As they turned the corner of the dark avenue of pines, and walked farther from the house, a part of their conversation might be heard. Charlôtte Daventry was speaking. It was not in her usual voice—her usual childish lively tone—her almost foolish manner. It was a new and different tone and manner.

“Yes! Isabella Foley is in love with William Grey—you may start, Mr. Crawford, but so it is!” turning towards him for an instant, with a half comic look of inquiry.

“From any other person but you, I would not have borne such an assertion,” said Crawford.

“And why from me?” rejoined Charlotte.

“Look at me, and I will tell you,” was the reply. It was made in a voice that could scarcely be misunderstood.

“When a man bids a woman look at him in so grave a voice as yours, his request is seldom granted,” said she. “If I were like the generality of my sex, I should turn my head the other way—I should blush—perhaps I should sigh,” added she, with almost a laugh. “But I do neither. Yes, I will look at you.”

Charlotte turned her head towards him. Their eyes met—there was a pause. “Yes,” continued she, after some minutes’ silence, “I repeat what I said; Isabella is already attached to William Grey, and therefore you hate him—I know it.”

“He is *your* cousin,” said Crawford. “*You* must love him. Can I hate him then?”

“My cousin!” said Charlotte, “yes, he is my cousin!” she added in a tone of irony. “Yes, I *must* love him—that name is a passport certainly; *my cousin*—it is a name to love!” the tone of contempt and irony was dropped. Her voice became serious and earnest. “You think, then, that Charlotte Daventry loves her cousin—loves him—loves anything! You think that she has love to bestow! Yes, yes! she did love once!” Frank Crawford started. “She has loved. Mr. Crawford, once she had a father, and to that father she gave fond, adoring, dutiful love. She gave it—she received it. Once—” she paused—“once she had a father; he died. He is dead now!”—there was another pause.—Those words had been spoken slowly, calmly, impressively: they expressed the full meaning those words could convey. They expressed not only that the

father was dead, but that the consciousness of his death lay heavy on the child. He was dead, and the cold, dead sense of desolation still lay chilling round her heart. "He is dead now," she repeated again in that same low, still voice. "You think that I can love once more? Aye, think so! They all may think—they all do think I can!—and you believe it too. I know that you believe—"

"Say anything—suppose anything, rather than that you cannot love!" exclaimed Crawford, with vehemence. "Say anything but that Charlotte Daventry cannot love once more!"

"Women have loved," said Charlotte gently, almost tenderly. "Women have loved, even where the power of affection seemed extinct." She sighed; her voice was soft, she turned her eyes on Crawford. Did a tear glisten there? Her hand was seized—it was not withdrawn: it was pressed—it was carried to his lips.

In a few minutes, the careless, childish voice of Charlotte Daventry, the good-hearted, simple girl, might have been heard; talking gaily and at random, wondering, pleased, and sorry. She was again the Charlotte Daventry of Weston and the Greys, as they returned to the house.

"Oh dear! we have had such a charming walk, Mrs. Foley," said Charlotte, as she entered, her face glowing with pleasure. "I was so sorry you did not all come out! It was really quite beautiful. But it is just dressing-time I see, and I must go and change my wet shoes."

"What a nice artless girl she is," said Mrs. Foley, as Charlotte bounded out of the room with a light and joyous step. "So cheerful and good-tempered!"

"Yes, remarkably so," said the Dowager Duchess.

"Dear Charlotte," said Sophy Grey, that night as they sat together before going to bed; "in a few more days, perhaps I shall see Lord Stoketon!"

"Yes, perhaps you will," said Charlotte, giving her a kiss; "and in a few more days Miss Grey will be engaged to marry Lord Stoketon, and then in a few more, and a few more—what will happen then, Sophy?"

"Oh dear! though," sighed Charlotte, after a moment's pause, "what shall we do without you? I am sure it must be very good—"

natured in me to be so glad! for what shall I do when you are gone?"

"Oh! you will do very well," said Sophy, "and you know you must come and see me. I shall often have you with me."

"You good, kind girl!" exclaimed Charlotte, her eyes sparkling with joy. "Will you indeed?"

"Yes, surely," said Sophy, eagerly. "But, Charlotte," she added, "I am not married yet! and, after all, I may not be even likely to be married!"

"Oh! we shall see," said Charlotte, archly, "a few more days will settle that—(if I was selfish, I should say)—I am afraid. I shall not have you to come and coze with before bed time then;" and Charlotte sighed a little. "But good-night," said she, rousing herself. "I am keeping you up, and your beauty will not be so bright as usual. Good-night," and Sophy left the room.

"Aye, good-night!" said Charlotte Daventry to herself, and she smiled. "Go and dream of him. Chance may befriend you, it is true! but if not—then dream in vain! Yes! a little time," she looked at herself in the glass—"this face—there is no peculiar beauty here. And yet—these eyes," they flashed with the thought, "have these no power? Has this wild head no bright imaginings to bless it?" she smiled as her eyes rested on her mirrored reflection—"to illumine this ordinary face, to lend a fascination—an attraction—aye, a power that guides—that leads those who think they lead? Can this tongue utter no false, insinuating, flattering words? Yes, here I behold myself—a simple, ordinary girl—and yet gifted with power to sooth and win all hearts. That enamoured fool, Frank Crawford! with all his selfish caution"—she half laughed. "He little knows that he is made a tool of Charlotte Daventry's! He thinks I love! I meant he should, for love is blind: and if he speaks, who would believe the story of a rejected lover? No, I am safe; his ill-nature—his want of truth are too well known. One is gained! and all shall be! All! Yes, alas! but one"—The bright glow faded from her cheek, the flashing of her eyes was quenched—they turned mournfully from the glass, on which they had rested with proud and scornful exultation—her arms fell listless by her side—"Yes, yes," muttered she in a sad and bitter tone, "all but one, whom I could love. Aye, shame

to say it! and he loves another! and I—I must look on—despair.

“But no, no!” and her eyes flashed again, as she proudly gazed on the form imaged in the glass. “Does Charlotte Daventry speak of despair? no, no! I will not despair! He shall leave—forget—despise her—and she! yes—there shall the serpent sting—she *shall*—she *will* love still; and day by day she shall pine, and pine; and the fire shall be kept alive—a skilful hand shall stir and feed the half expiring flame, when religion—aye religion, duty, pride—a woman’s pride, has almost quenched that flame, the skilful hand shall raise it once more—shall revive—shall feed it. The pale cheek—the failing step—the tear—the would-be smile—the faint heart-broken smile—” She paused: the image was before her in all its life, and sad reality: she saw it, and a smile was on her lips.

“Yes,” continued she, “Revenge is sweet—Father, for you it is sweet! Yet, father”—and the smile was gone, “when the serpent stung—when he was nursed, caressed, and loved, and he prepared to sting—say, did the venom never recoil? Did he never sting himself?—Oh, father, yes—it must be so—there is a serpent here”—she pressed her hand upon her heart;—her eyes were wild—“there is a serpent, stinging, curling, gnawing here!” she screamed—“again, again, I feel it! *Her* eyes could not have stung me so—*her* kiss”—she shuddered—“No, no! it was the serpent’s sting!” But enough of this; we will no farther undraw the veil of privacy. Let us return with the morning light to the breakfast-table at Chatterton.

CHAPTER XXVI.

It was Sunday—the day was just remembered by one or two of the party, besides the Greys, some of the Foleys’, and Mr. Temple.

“By the bye, what’s the day?” said Mr. Cartwright. “Oh Sunday! very true, I thought it was.”

It was just remembered to find an excuse for not going to church. Some little ailment that had never been heard or thought of before, rendered it out of the question that they could go to a church a quarter of a mile from the house.

“ Oh! I would not have you think of it! ” said Mr. Foley, in a civil manner, as if he were persuading them not to stand upon form with himself. “ The carriages are always ready on Sunday morning for any who choose to go : but I never make a point of it. I always make a rule that the servants should go. I am very strict in that respect. I hope you think we are right? ” said he, to the Duchess.

“ Perfectly, ” said her grace, hurrying over her breakfast, for she heard the hour for church was eleven.

“ Mrs. Foley and Isabella always go. Mrs. Foley thinks it right to go as an example to the lower orders. It is highly proper they should attend. It keeps them from the ale house, and from theft and murder, and all those horrible crimes incidental to the canaille. ”

Ah, ” said Mr. Temple, “ that is a truly discriminating view of our religious duties! You know how to make distinctions, Foley. ”

Mr. Foley was almost preparing to bow, delighted at a proof that the great Mr. Temple approved of what he said. He was silent, expecting more would follow, and with the blissful certainty that all the party were listening.

“ That is quite a new idea, ” continued Edward Temple. “ It is certainly singular that it never should have occurred to me before, that the rich have nothing to do with prayer and praise. Now, I suppose, ” said he, looking towards Mr. Foley, who seemed rather puzzled, and not quite prepared for what had been said; “ I should imagine, ” continued he, with a modest, inquiring look, “ that any great man, a king for instance, or a prime minister, or a commander in chief, can have no sins to be forgiven! I should suppose they would never say their prayers, not even private ones, nor offer up praise and thanksgiving! Yes, I see you think so, ” making a sort of acknowledgment to Mr. Foley : “ you hold out a high premium on exertion and talent : it is an interesting consideration indeed, and may be useful. ”

He stopped. No one spoke. Mr. Foley was not quite sure

whether to be angry or not; but he thought it better to let it pass; so he turned to the Duchess, and talked about Mrs. Foley's new school.

“Do not you wish,” said Edward Temple, turning to Anne, “that you were a king or a prime minister? You will not answer;” and then lowering his voice so that she alone could hear, “you look grave. I fear you think me wrong. You think, perhaps,” continued he, anxiously, “that I ought not to have shown my indignation? Yes—then I fear I must have been wrong. I should have restrained myself. But yet,” continued he, “to hear any human being, and above all any educated person professing to regard religion as made for the poor alone! To imagine himself raised above the want of improvement! The self-complacency, the presumption, of supposing he needs neither instruction nor forgiveness; that he owes no gratitude for the very blessings he boasts. No, I could not let it pass as if I concurred. But I see,” said he, checking himself, “that you think perhaps it is I who am most wanting in humility. I am sorry,” he added in a half mortified tone, “that I did not let it pass.” Anne was silent whilst Mr. Temple spoke. It had been delightful to her that he should seek her opinion; but she felt afraid of answering such an appeal, and of appearing to think that he could really desire its expression. She saw, however, he expected an answer.

“I hope you were not wrong,” said she, “for if you were, I fear I must have been so also. I believe my only reason for looking grave, if I did so, was my dread that you should say less than you did. I felt eager that you should turn such opinions into ridicule, as I knew you could—that you should make them appear in their true light.” Anne checked herself, and the blush of eagerness turned to one of timidity, as she found she had been carried on by her feelings, and she added, with some degree of confusion: “I suppose it was this which made me look grave.”

Edward Temple's eyes had been fixed on her as she spoke, and he thought, as the glow of animation lighted up her face, that he never had beheld a being more lovely and intelligent.

Edward Temple had not spoken in vain. Many, who had not thought of church before, or who had spoken doubtfully of slight colds, slight head-aches, etc., now found that there was nothing to

prevent their attendance, and nearly all the party went. Charlotte Daventry had complained of a cold the evening before, and Mrs. Grey would not allow her to go. Frank Crawford seldom went, and he did not go this morning. Lady Downton could not go—she was too ill; but alas! poor soul! she might as well have been at church, for not a word of gossip did she obtain, even from Lady Caroline Fullerton.

“No,” said Charlotte Daventry to Frank Crawford, as they sat together in the drawing-room, “I will promise that William Grey shall not marry her.”

“And how must I rely on your promise, or even your power?” said Crawford. Charlotte Daventry turned her eyes upon him. They were not at that moment wild and sparkling as they had often been: but full of softness.

“Can you doubt my wish?” said she, in a half-upbraiding voice; and then in an instant changing her look, her eyes once more flashing with animation, “can you doubt my power?”

“No, no!” said Crawford, as he gazed on her with eager admiration,—“no, no! How could I doubt it?”

“Power! what a pretty thing it is!” said Charlotte, after a moment’s pause, in her natural childish voice, and with her ordinary half silly manner. “How I wish I was a queen! Oh! Mr. Cartwright,” said she, as he entered, “I have been wishing I were a queen. Should not you like it so much?”

“Ha, ha, ha,” said Mr. Cartwright, “certainly if you were queen, I should wish to be king;” with a gay, gallant air, making a bow to Miss Daventry and her perfections.

“Oh! should you?” said Charlotte, good simple girl, quite innocent of the compliment implied. “Oh yes! I suppose so,” added she, after a moment’s thought of why he did not rather wish to be a queen. “Certainly; you would wish to be a king and I a queen. Well,” said she, with a bounding step out of the room; “I must go and look for Lady Downton, and see whether she has quite killed Lady Caroline with talking. Good-bye, Mr. Crawford.” She cast a comic half-despairing look at him as she left the room. Mr. Cartwright had turned the other way.

“Miss Daventry,” said Crawford, following her. “Miss Daventry,”—she hesitated: he followed her out of the room. “Miss

Daventry, you will walk with me?" said he, in an imploring tone and manner. "Do not refuse. I cannot bear to be refused by you. I cannot bear to be away from you. Say you will walk with me, as it seems that in the house we are to be interrupted every minute by some officious simpleton or other."

"Mr. Crawford," said Charlotte, in a very quiet voice, and with a very demure look, "I told you and Mr. Cartwright that I was going to Lady Downton. I do not know why you should doubt my word;" and she almost ran away, humming the air of a song Lady Emily Harville had sung the evening before. Crawford looked after her as she went.

"That girl has a power to torment," thought he, "but then what a heaven to be certain of her love!—to know she loved one, as such a being might love! Can she know how her careless manner torments? Yes, yes, she knows her power!" and Crawford returned to the room.

"Why, what's the matter, Crawford?" said Mr. Cartwright. "Ten thousand furies are in your face—the true reflection of a woman's frowns! So the girl frowned at you, did she, and bid you go back? Aye! she can smile though!" added he, with a complacent look at himself, as he adjusted his cravat by the glass.

"Furies!" said Crawford, "do you mean to insinuate that she smiles on such——" he checked himself: he thought of the madness of exposing his feelings to a man like Mr. Cartwright. He compressed his lips firmly together, as if to prevent the rage that boiled within from bursting forth. He threw himself on a chair, and was silent.

"Come, my dear fellow," said Mr. Cartwright, rather alarmed by the effect of his words, and not wishing to have a quarrel with a man like Frank Crawford, "come, my dear fellow, you know my little jokes. Well, I am going out for a walk," said he, as he received no answer, and trying to look careless, he walked out of the room.

"The safest course;" said he to himself. "I meant nothing. The girl *has* smiles—it's true enough; and smiles for me too, let Crawford think what he pleases; and who was to know that he was smitten? Who indeed would ever have thought that Crawford could be smitten—it's astonishing! However, no one heard him, and he did not finish the sentence. There was no occasion for me

to guess what he meant to say ! ” and Mr. Cartwright walked away his sense of the affront in a pleasant ramble round the grounds at Chatterton, till the church bells ringing told him the party would be returned from church, and then he also bent his steps toward the house, for there was safety in numbers.

This was the last evening to be spent at Chatterton. On the morrow the party was going to break up. How many were sorry, or how many were glad, it would be difficult to say ! for who can judge what feeling lurks under those civil words of leave-taking, those hopes with smiles of meeting again, those regrets with sighs at parting ? Some may ask themselves, “ when shall we meet again ? ” to say and think, “ I do not care how long it may be ; ” some to hope that meeting may be soon, to sigh that it may be long delayed—aye, perhaps, for ever ? Some may ask, “ when shall we meet again ? ” and the answer will sound like a knell, “ perhaps never more ! ” that ‘ good-bye ’ may press mournfully on the heart, that parting cause the inward groan ; and the blood rushes swiftly to the face in the struggle to repress the tears so ready to burst forth. Some may ask, “ when shall we meet again ? ” and, as they look their last on those gentle sorrowful eyes, and hear the soft good-bye, to some it says, “ when those eyes will no longer look kindly, when that soft voice will no longer speak in fondness, when time will have changed that heart—then shall we meet again ! ” Some may ask, “ when shall we meet again ? ” to answer with melancholy foreboding, “ when sorrow has been—when happiness, the careless joy of heart, is gone—when those whom now we see and hear, whom we have loved from the days of childhood even till now—when the young, the beautiful, the glad—when they are cold and still, are lost to us for ever—when we are grown old in feeling—when the ties that bound us to earth are gone—then shall we meet again ! ”

“ When shall we meet again ? ” Yes, there is sadness in those words, even in gay, careless partings when spoken in gaiety and happiness. There is something that may make us think and moralize, and ask ourselves shall we ever meet again ? for the grave lies near us, and the hand of death may now be upon us, upon them ; and another day—another hour may not be ours, or theirs ; and we may never meet again !

CHAPTER XXVII.

ON that last evening at Chatterton, and on the following morning, Edward Temple conversed with Charlotte Daventry.

“ She has either better sense, and better feelings, or greater artifice and power of dissimulation than I gave her credit for,” thought he, when it was over ; when alone that night in his room he remained deep in thought for some time ; “ I wish it were otherwise,” said he, half aloud. “ If it is not so, how dangerous to her disposition—to her happiness !”

Anne wished Mr. Temple good-bye in the pleasing hope that ere long she might see him again. The preceding evening she heard her father invite him to Weston. Mr. Temple accepted the invitation with evident pleasure, and turned, for an instant, to look at her as he did so. If Anne did not feel happy she ought to have done so ; and if her pleased, her almost grateful look at her father, when a few minutes after he approached and laid his hand affectionately on her shoulder, may be accepted as a proof, it is certain that she did feel happy.

As she drove home the next day and heard her father speaking in the highest terms of Mr. Temple, she felt that it was almost worth while to be separated from him for the satisfaction of listening to his praises, and for the pleasure of looking forward to meeting him again.

And what were the feelings of some of those left at Chatterton ? George Foley had seen that Anne Grey preferred Edward Temple. He was not sure of Mr. Temple’s feelings towards her, and he believed that however much he might admire her, it was probable that, as a fastidious self-adoring man of the world, he would regard matrimony in the light of a sacrifice. He thought highly of Edward Temple in many respects ; not only of his talents, but of his feelings and principles. Still as he was a man of the world, he thought that self might triumph even over Anne Grey in the heart of Edward

Temple. With such an opinion, independent of all selfish sorrow, he watched with pain the growth of her affection for him : he feared that she might hereafter have cause to grieve that she had ever become acquainted with Edward Temple. He longed for the privilege of putting her on her guard, for whilst he acquitted Temple of premeditated deceit, he knew the power of self, he knew the many excuses too easy to be found for all that is pleasing, amusing, or interesting, where selfishness is at hand to prompt.

In this view of Edward Temple's probable conduct, there was much that might have been gratifying to George Foley; but if it did encourage him in a hope that, with steady perseverance and patience on his part, he might one day secure for himself the affections of Anne; he was too amiable not to grieve most sincerely, for anything which could occasion distress to her feelings. It would, perhaps, be uncharitable to pry too far into his heart, or to define too exactly the degrees of sorrow or joy he experienced. Suffice it to say that, whilst he felt sorrow for her, he almost dared to trust with a fond, pleasing, yet uncertain hope to the happiness of one day calling her his own.

"My dear," said Mrs. Grey to Anne, that evening at Weston, "what a very nice young man Mr. George Foley is. I like him better than ever!"

"He is a very sensible good sort of fellow!" said William, and this was high praise from him.

"Yes, I thought so," said Mrs. Grey, looking with delight at him. "I always thought so. You see, my dear," turning to Anne with her very happiest smile, "that William says he is a very sensible man—a very good sort of young man."

"I said 'fellow,' ma'am," interrupted William.

"Ah, yes," said Mrs. Grey, unchecked by the interruption. "He is indeed a very delightful young man, and Mr. Grey always says so. He talked a good deal to you, Anne!"

"Yes," said Anne, "and he is one to whom I always like to talk;" she even added a few words more in his praise, and Mrs. Grey was so pleased at her warmth of approval that she sat smiling at her as she spoke, and said, "Very true, my dear Anne, that's very sensible:" when she had done.

William laughed and said, "Very judicious praise you give

your daughters, ma'am ! I hope you will praise me whenever I make a spirited *éloge* of any young lady of my acquaintance. Come, Anne, you shall be Mrs. George Foley, if you'll be a good girl ! ”

“ My dear William ! ” said Anne, looking at him with surprise and a little annoyed ; “ My dear William, what nonsense you are talking ! ”

“ Yes, yes, my dear, ” said Mrs. Grey, looking delighted at the nonsense, but rather alarmed lest it should have a bad effect and put Anne too much on her guard with Mr. George Foley ; “ Yes, yes, my dear, it is only his little joke. Come, William, we will have no more of this nonsense : you know it's all a joke ! ”

“ I never thought it was anything else, ma'am, ” said William ; “ and after all there is no joke equal to two people falling in love and marrying. ”

“ Your mother and I thought so, William, thirty years ago, ” said Mr. Grey, smiling.

“ Seven-and-twenty, my dear ! ” said Mrs. Grey. “ Seven-and-twenty, this day three weeks. ”

“ Well then, I'll have another cup of tea if you please, ma'am, ” said William, “ in honour of what is to be commemorated this day three weeks, and a little stronger than the last if you can afford it. Did you read——'s speech in the paper to-day, Sir ? ” said he, to his father, whilst Mrs. Grey was murmuring to herself about nerves and “ actually as strong as coffee, ” and endeavouring to make weak tea look strong by filling William's cup quite full.

But here we must leave the domestic circle at Weston, to turn to one small comfortable sitting-room of Isabella Foley's in the large rambling house at Chatterton. There we find George Foley and herself seated for a fire-side coze, neither of them quite so much at ease as usual in their confidential fire-side talk, when all thoughts and feelings were usually avowed and discussed between the brother and sister.

They were neither of them quite at ease, for each had something they wished to confess, yet each scarce knew how to begin.

“ The Greys are very agreeable people, ” said George, looking at his boots.

“ Charlotte Daventry is a very nice girl, ” said Isabella, reaching

a hand-screen; whether to shade her face from the fire, or from observation, I do not know.

“How pretty Miss Grey is,” said George, just looking at Isabella to see what she thought of that; but Isabella did not look that way, and her face was so screened that he could gather nothing from it. “I think some people might call her prettier than her sister.”

George Foley was touching delicate ground: he paused, hoping to have gained something.

“Yes, certainly,” said Isabella, not exactly knowing what she was saying; “yes certainly, much prettier!”

“Do you think so?” said George, his caution all gone at hearing her assent to such an opinion.

“Oh! I fancied you thought so,” said Isabella, finding she had not answered quite right, yet knew not why. “Miss Grey is rather,” — hesitating a little and putting her screen still nearer to her face, “Miss Grey is rather—I think she is a little—perhaps like her brother.”

“Yes, very,” said George, returning Isabella’s compliment by answering something to which he had not attended.

“No, do you think so?” said Isabella, roused at last, as George had been. “I cannot say, I think so very like—scarcely indeed,” she added, getting animated in defence of William Grey’s good or bad looks, “scarcely indeed, I should say, any likeness at all.”

“Oh! I beg your pardon,” said George, recollecting himself. “I misunderstood you: I thought you were saying how like William Grey was to his sister. I only agreed with you. I really never thought much about it.”

“William Grey is a very agreeable person,” said Isabella, turning away.

“Yes, he is a good rattling sort of fellow, rather blunt and bearish, I think; but clever, and I dare say good-hearted.”

“Do you think he is so very blunt and bearish, George?” asked Isabella. “Blunt, to be sure he is, and I like that sort of bluntness. One sees there is no deceit: but I do not think he is bearish! It is unjust to call him bearish,” added she, rather warmly.

“Well, my dear Bell, I did not mean to say anything against

him. I think he is a good, manly, open-hearted fellow, with a great deal of shrewdness and good sense, some quiet humour, and appreciation of humour in others, with rather too little consideration for the feelings of others, and rather too fond of self."

"No, not quite that," murmured Isabella very softly, and not meaning it to be quite audible.

"But I did not know, Bell, that you would care whether I praised William Grey or not?"

"No, indeed," said Isabella, with a determined effort to avail herself of this opening. "No, indeed, I dare say you did not. Indeed I don't know why I should care," and poor Isabella got very much confused, sighed, and looked from behind her screen at the fire, saw nothing in the fire to help her, and at last made one more desperate effort to tell her brother at once, how much she was interested in William Grey's character; and how she feared he did not care for her; and how Charlotte Daventry, who was such a dear good girl, was so fond of him and praised him so much!

George listened with great seriousness, and with great interest, just as a brother should listen to such a confession from a sister.

"I know I ought not to love him," said Isabella, "for I have no reason to suppose it reciprocal—if he even likes me, it is but as a mere acquaintance—a pleasing girl, perhaps," said she, blushing as she spoke, and hesitating.

George was grave as he listened to Isabella: to own the truth, he was sincerely sorry to hear her confession. He saw that she was more seriously attached to William Grey than he had wished to believe; for, with a character such as hers, attachment could not be that light, changeable sentiment it might be with others. He had heard of William Grey's admiration for Jane Graham, which rendered it peculiarly unlikely that he should return his sister's affection. George thought it right to tell his sister what he knew on this subject. It was a disagreeable task to dispel any pleasing illusion that might have dwelt in her mind. Still it was right so to do, and Isabella bore the intelligence better than her brother had expected; she had had so little hope, that it was less disappointment to hear that he already loved another than it might otherwise have proved. Besides, it was not quite certain; and

might she not still allow herself to look forward to time to effect what she desired?

It now became George's turn to confess; and he had soon acquainted Isabella of his love for Anne Grey, and of her apparent preference for Edward Temple. Isabella in her turn listened and looked grave.

"Yes," said George Foley, "I love Anne Grey!"

"I am sorry for it," said Isabella sadly, looking down with a discomposed air. George fixed his eyes upon her inquiringly, as if to see whether there were any other reason for this regret than that which he himself had mentioned.

"Yes, indeed, dear Bella, I thought you would pity me. I knew you must be sorry because there is so much hopelessness in the case."

"But, George," said Isabella, gravely, "it is not for that only, but I am sorry on every account that you should love Anne Grey." George looked at her in surprise. "I shall distress you, dear George," she said, looking at him sorrowfully: "It seems we are fated to-day to say unpleasant things to one another."

George reddened with alarm as Isabella spoke. He looked anxiously at her, begged her to go on, and Isabella then told him all that she had learned from Charlotte Daventry concerning the disposition of Anne, and her own reasons for believing that it was true. She described Charlotte Daventry's manner about the music—all that had dropped from her at various times, both with regard to Anne, to Mr. Grey, and to all the family—and her praises of William were not forgotten.

George listened: he leant his head on his hand; he was painfully intent on what his sister said. When she told him that Charlotte Daventry had betrayed that Anne was jealous of her doing anything better than herself, he interrupted her by exclaiming, "Jealous! jealous of another's accomplishments! No, that is a mistake! That is not true!" When she told him of Anne's temper—of her want of feeling and consideration for her—of her dissimulation, he again exclaimed, "No, no," then again was quiet, and by a sign bid Isabella continue. But when she had done—when she had said all—had expressed her detestation of such a character as Anne Grey's—had implied her conviction that her brother must soon, if

not at once, look with equal detestation on such a deceitful character—when she spoke of her love and pity for Charlotte Daventry, he no longer restrained himself—he was no longer silent.

He started up, and bursting forth in a tone of mingled anger and agitation, exclaimed, “Do not say that again, Isabella! Do not repeat that you love, that you admire Charlotte Daventry! You are not to blame—I do not blame you—you have been deceived; but never talk to me again of loving the person who could speak ill of Anne Grey! Whoever breathed a word against her has uttered a falsehood! I would stake my life that it is false; and Isabella, I bid you beware of the person who could defame such a character!” He walked out of the room unable to repress his indignation.

“He is gone!” said Isabella sadly. “I have grieved—offended him! and yet if Charlotte Daventry should be right! what else could I have done? And yet if Charlotte Daventry is deceitful?” the colour rushed to her face, “I have trusted her! Oh! if George is right? It may be so!” she sighed. “How unhappy either way! Dear George! He was angry. I never saw him angry with me before. Oh! how I wish I had never known Charlotte Daventry!” and Isabella Foley leant her head on her hand, and burst into tears.

“Isabella,” said George, as he came into her room before they separated for the night; “I am afraid I was cross with you. I was angry at the time. Will you forgive me?” laying his hand on hers.

“Dear George,” said Isabella, her face brightening with pleasure, “how glad I am to hear you speak so to me again! Indeed there is nothing for me to forgive! But I have been very unhappy. I wish we had never come to Chatterton, George! Do not you? I wish we had never known any of them!” looking up at him, with the tears standing in her eyes.

“No, dear Bella,” said George, “I cannot wish that. We shall find yet much happiness here I dare say; and as to the Greys—” after a pause—“that perhaps will all be well in time. But I want to speak to you about that, Isabella. I was unjust to you before, but I was not quite myself. I could not be calm to hear Anne Grey traduced. I firmly believe that it is false—there is some mistake. I will not blame any one till I know where it is deserved. I have been suffering the last few hours in thinking of my injustice to you.

You may have misunderstood Miss Daventry's words, or there may be something we do not understand. I do not wish to judge harshly of any one; still there is something I do not quite like about her. Of course you are aware that Frank is in love with her. Every one must remark that; and I know it is so, not only from what he said himself, but from something Cartwright told me : however that is less to the purpose. But there is something strange in her manner about this : in short, Bella dear, I do not wish you should place too much confidence in her. I had doubts before, and all you have told me has but helped to confirm them. It is utterly impossible that Anne Grey should be what she would represent; and I do not believe that Mr. Grey would ever be guilty of the faults of which she accuses him."

"She did not exactly accuse," interposed Isabella. "She only let fall things."

"It is the same thing," said George : "you must either have heard wrongly, interpreted wrongly, or she could not have been aware what she was saying; or, Isabella, I fear there is another alternative. Consider a little. Is it not rather strange, that, short as your acquaintance with Miss Daventry has been, she should have already contrived to let fall so many things by accident, against the characters and dispositions of those with whom she lives? That, with all the cleverness, the sensibility, the feeling, of which you tell me she is possessed, she should still have been so weak, unguarded, and I should say, so ungenerous, as to let out to you in the course of a four days' visit, so many circumstances to the disadvantage of her nearest relatives? Would not any girl with a particle of common sense, or of good feeling, have contrived to keep them to herself? You say her manner, when she talked to you alone, was so different from her usual one, that you do not believe her to be childish and thoughtless, as she appears. What then does this prove? If she is not really light and thoughtless, where is her excuse? Do you see nothing suspicious—nothing contradictory in this?"

Isabella considered—looked doubtful, and at length said, "Certainly it is strange : it never struck me so before—but then, George, Charlotte Daventry is unlike other people. She is so natural! She does not consider what she is saying."

"That is a good excuse with some people," said George, "for

saying everything that is most ill-natured, and for concealing nothing that, for the sake of others, ought to be concealed."

"But she never professed to be natural," said Isabella.

"No, she had no occasion to profess. She left no one in doubt of her being what is called a 'natural character.' A natural character, Isabella, sometimes is but another word for an artificial one. I will not as yet say positively it is so with her. There may be some mistake; but I have my doubts. Her manner is very variable: she may be an excellent actress. I sometimes almost feel that she is constantly acting a part."

"Acting a part!" said Isabella, looking astonished. "Oh no! that cannot be!"

"If you had seen her one morning as I did," said George, "perhaps you would not be so surprised. I happened to come into the room when she and Frank were sitting together. They did not observe me enter. Her manner—her look then, Isabella, was different to what you have ever seen it—in short"—he paused a moment—"in short, Bella, do not make a friend of Charlotte Daventry. I have noticed the coldness of your manner to the Miss Greys, and they noticed it, I am sure. I was surprised and sorry to perceive it. Try to think differently about them. Try to find out for yourself: that is the best way, after all. A character may generally be discovered by study, I will try too. I will not be blinded to the faults even of Anne Grey, if she has any: it has distressed me much to hear even an imputation cast on her, of the falsehood of which I can obtain no immediate proof: yet I could almost stake my life that it is false. Let us, however, both be on our guard. We need not trust too implicitly, nor blame too easily;—and now, good-night, dear Bella. You have forgiven me I hope?"

"Forgiven you! It is I who have to be forgiven;" and they separated with their wonted kindness and affection.

George Foley retired to rest, to think whether there could be a fault in Anne Grey, and to come to the happy conclusion that there was not one; and Isabella retired to rest to think whether, if Charlotte Daventry had spoken untruly of all the rest of the Greys, she might not still have spoken the truth of William; and to convince herself that all that had been uttered in his praise must be true. Thus did George and Isabella both fall asleep, having mentally set-

tled their mutual questions in the way people always settle all questions for or against their wishes—the way most pleasing to themselves.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

WE once more return to Weston, just as the Miss Greys and Charlotte Daventry have retired to their rooms. “I am glad you are come,” said Charlotte to Anne, as she entered her room, and they seated themselves over the fire, “for I have not had a coze with you for such an age! and I have a great deal I want to say to you. I want to speak to you of *him*,” looking archly at Anne. “Yes of him—you know who?”

“No,” said Anne, belying her assertion by a deep blush.

“No!” said Charlotte; “but that blush, my own Anne, says ‘yes.’ Yes! I want to talk to you about Mr. Temple.”

“Ah!” said Anne, not looking very much surprised notwithstanding her ‘no;’ “I thought no one would have found that out!”

“I have only found out one thing,” said Charlotte; “that Mr. Temple is in love with you: farther I do not know.”

“Nor so far, indeed,” said Anne, looking very happy, “for it is probably not the case.”

“Not the case!” said Charlotte, with a tone of astonishment. “Do you mean to be so *very* modest as to doubt the truth of that? No, Anne, he loves you—that is certain, and what I wish to say is, that I congratulate you upon your conquest! I longed to tell you what I thought of him.—I longed to tell you that you were sometimes so cold in your manner to him, I feared you would frighten him away; and I would not have you lose him for the world! No, Anne, I think him so perfect that I have set my heart on seeing you married to him. Yes, it would so grieve me if he should go away mortified by your coldness, and perhaps marry some other person whose manner was less indifferent.”

“Charlotte,” said Anne, looking half alarmed, yet half pleased, “you forget what every one says, or perhaps you have never heard it—that Mr. Temple is not a marrying man.”

“Oh! but he is—he must be! No man, so good as he is, could behave so ill as to fall in love—”

“Nay, Charlotte,” said Anne, laughing, “you may allow a person to fall in love if he cannot help it?”

“No, I will not,” said Charlotte. “No man like him would behave so ill as to let himself fall in love, and make love to a girl, and be so attentive to her, without meaning to marry. No, Mr. Temple is superior to this! I cannot think so ill of him as you would do, Anne.”

“*I think ill of him!*” exclaimed Anne: “but, indeed,” continued she, after a moment’s pause; “I should have no reason—no particular reason, for blaming him if he had never meant anything—if he married any one else to-morrow,” sighing. “He never said anything you know, Charlotte, to bind me—never asked—never—”

“Oh yes! I know what you mean, Anne. He never said, ‘Will you marry me?’ no; but he said a great deal that meant the same; and in short, Anne, I do hope you will marry him some day. You think me careless and foolish, and so I am sometimes,—I know I am; but I *can* feel and think seriously, and I have not seen you and Mr. Temple together without very great interest, and when none of the others saw it—no, not even Sophy, for you know she said once she believed Mr. Temple rather admired her—”

“Did she?” said Anne, starting. Charlotte took no notice and went on.

“When none of them saw it, I found it out; and I have watched him, and tried to study his character, and I see that he loves you,—that he is worthy of you—that he could understand and appreciate you, as few others can, and my whole heart is set upon your marrying him. Yes! though I seem such a careless, giddy girl, when I really love people I can find out things that others do not—perhaps because they do not care so much!”

“Dear Charlotte,” said Anne, affectionately, “how warm-hearted and kind you are! But you think too highly of me, I fear, and too much of Mr. Temple’s preference for me. Indeed it is not likely to

be more than merely a slight preference. He is never likely to think seriously of me, and instead of encouraging myself to become more attached to him, I should try all I can to resist the feeling. But I must go, Charlotte. I must not let an interesting subject make me keep you up all night. So good night, dear."

"Breathes there the girl with heart so dead,
Who never to herself hath said,

this is the very person I should prefer to all others if he would only fall in love with me? No, no, there is not such a person," said Charlotte to herself, as Anne left the room, "No—even the meek, retiring Anne Grey is caught; aye, fairly caught! and she may struggle and struggle, and never will she get that little constant heart out of the web in which it is so nicely entangled! Never whilst Charlotte Daventry lives. No, my pretty fly, let the spider run round and round you, and drop a sugared word—a sugared tone now and then to amuse you, whilst it makes each thread the tighter: yes—the spider shall draw it each day tighter—harder—and the venom meanwhile shall drop into its veins—drop by drop. It shall be carefully instilled, and there the poor struggling heart shall remain, and the spider shall entwine and triumph." The picture was too delightful: Charlotte Daventry smiled,—that peculiar smile gleamed through her eyes. "And there it shall remain," she continued, "till its struggling is over—till it is broken—till it is cold and still. Yes—pretty, gay and gladsome thing—flutter awhile—you know not what is in store for you! What! does she think that Charlotte Daventry will rejoice to see him marry *her*. To see him love her? No! I can prize that love, and I claim it! It shall be mine—it shall never be Anne Grey's."

She clasped her hands together, as she uttered these words: she stood firm, erect. Proudly she drew herself up; determination, and fixed resolve were painted in her countenance—her very form—her very attitude! She stood for a moment thus, but then a mournful thought passed through her mind, and all was changed; her figure no longer retained its firm erectness; her head was no longer proudly raised in triumph; her hands no longer clasped. No—one moment, and all was gone.

“He loves her,” murmured she. “He loves me not. He scorns me!” and she rested her head mournfully on her hand, whilst the tears slowly and silently streamed down her cheek.

Anne had quitted her cousin that night with the thought so strongly impressed on her mind that if ever she should marry, she would like to marry exactly such a person as Mr. Temple, that, for once in her life, she behaved like a heroine and dreamt of the hero! She dreamt she was sitting in the library at Weston, that Edward Temple walked in—that he was going to put out his hand—that he looked delighted to see her. She felt the glow of pleasure through her heart, at his look and manner, when suddenly Charlotte Daventry appeared—she snatched away his hand just as she was extending her own: his face and manner were changed—he frowned on her—he looked at Charlotte with kindness—with that look with which he had so often regarded her: he again turned towards herself: it was with dislike; Charlotte looked at her too, and her look was one of scorn and hatred. She was going to speak—to ask her why she so regarded her: she made an effort and awoke.

“What a horrid dream!” thought Anne, and she could scarcely shake it from her mind: it still kept recurring, and she actually started when she heard Charlotte Daventry’s voice, and felt her hand on her shoulder. She almost expected to behold the same horrid face that she had witnessed in her dream.

And what were Edward Temple’s thoughts during this time? Had he any terrible dreams?—Not one; but, as he found himself alone that evening at Temple-court—had walked across the pillared hall, had passed through the spacious drawing-room, entered the large gallery-like library, and brought out of it the book he wanted, and looked, as he returned, at the deserted drawing-room, observed the melancholy appearance of the tables without work, drawings, or any female occupations to give the room its air of comfort; returned to his own snug room, seated himself in his comfortable arm-chair, opened his book, stirred the fire, and settled himself to the intellectual delights of solitary reading; what shall we say to a sensible, clever, intellectual hero, when we know that, instead of going steadily with mind and eye through the first page of his book, he actually let the one wander to the fire—the other still farther?

As he sat there in his own large splendid house, with everything indicative of wealth about him, all to be enjoyed alone, for a moment a vision passed across his mind ; a gentle being presented herself to his imagination—a gentle being with a low-toned voice, soft blue eyes, and graceful figure ; he thought of a light and noiseless tread, a joyous laugh, a ready smile, a ready tear, quick intelligence, conversational powers, a cultivated mind, and elegance of thought ; he thought of a being to look to him with fond affection, to be ever near him, to become attentive as he spoke, to warm into enthusiasm as she listened, to reveal to him the rich stores of her mind—to infuse her charm, her taste, her cheerfulness into everything around him—to give to the lonely house a look of comfort and of occupation—to sing, to laugh, to talk, to be sad with him, and to love him : yes—to love as she alone could love : and in return to be prized—beloved—adored. The vision for a moment passed across his mind—a gentle, affectionate being—a wife. It was a vision of Anne Grey. Only for a moment—and then—the leaf of the book was turned—another, and another—and Edward Temple was once more deep in his intellectual delights.

CHAPTER XXIX.

“ Who can that be, come so early ? ” said Mrs. Grey, as she heard the door bell ring.

“ Oh ! some one on business to Papa, I suppose, ” said Sophy ; and on she went with a difficult passage in her music, which she had vainly tried three times to conquer. One finger always came in that brilliant run where the other finger ought to have come, and that one little finger set all the others wrong. Might we not moralize on this, and say how one little fault sometimes sets a whole character wrong—sets all our actions wrong—causes the misfortunes of our future life ? One slight fault fires the train of our misfortunes ; and then, in quick succession, one

calamity causes another—all from one slight error in the outset.

But we leave the reader to moralize farther if he likes, whilst we usher in the early visitor to Mr. Grey, and introduce him as Lord Stoketon.

“ Lord Stoketon !” exclaimed Mr. Grey.

“ Yes,” said Lord Stoketon, in a hurried, agitated manner, half turning his head away, as he received Mr. Grey’s hearty shake of the hand—“ Yes, you could not expect me ! I did not expect to find myself here !” and he seated himself without seeming to know what he was doing. Mr. Grey was alarmed—he saw that Lord Stoketon was in great agitation. A thought of his son rushed through his mind. He waited almost breathless, for him to speak.

“ Would to God I had no cause for coming so !” said Lord Stoketon, “ for coming with such a different motive to that to which I had so fondly looked forward ! Mr. Grey ! I am going to distress you.

Mr. Grey laid hold of a chair. He looked eagerly at Lord Stoketon : “ Any illness ?” he murmured, scarcely audibly. ”

“ No, no,” nothing of that kind ! Good God ! what a fool I have been !” as he saw Mr. Grey turn pale. “ No—no ! no illness—no death !”

“ Thank God !” uttered Mr. Grey, as he looked at Lord Stoketon, and tried to smile, saying, “ I was foolish to be so much alarmed—but a father—” continued he, half smiling, “ a father always dreads some calamity to his children when they are not all around him. I thought of my boy ! It was a father’s folly.”

Lord Stoketon buried his face in his hands, and for a minute he was unable to speak. “ Mr. Grey,” said he, at length, raising his head, “ you spoke of a father’s feelings. I am come to wound those feelings—and yet I have a hope—but I must not speak of that. I come on the part of a friend, to accuse Miss Grey of spreading malicious reports against his character, and that of those most dear to him—for the purpose of breaking off his union, and—” speaking with great effort—“ because she herself was attached to him. I come to ask you to make Miss Grey retract these unfortunate assertions”—he paused in strong emotion. “ I did think to come for a very different purpose,” he added mournfully—“ to ask your permission—but—I must not think of what I had hoped to come

for ! Mr. Grey, if you can say that all that is alleged is false, you will indeed make me happy !”

Mr. Grey changed colour as Lord Stoketon spoke : when first he mentioned his daughter’s name he had looked indignant, and was inclined to interrupt him ; but he checked himself, and allowed him to continue ; but when Lord Stoketon stopped, and appealed to him, he replied, with evident emotion :

“ Lord Stoketon, you have brought an accusation against my daughter which, if made lightly—if made unjustly—I warn you candidly, it had been better you should never have made. It had been better for any man to have deliberated before he came to accuse a daughter to her father,” said he, proudly. “ But I do not believe that you mean to speak unkindly. I believe that it grieves you to say this to me—that you think there is reason for believing it. God knows how you came to believe such a thing !”

Lord Stoketon suddenly raised his head as Mr. Grey uttered these last words. “ Lord Stoketon,” continued he, “ here is my hand, in token that towards you I feel no anger, that my indignation is not against you.” Lord Stoketon took the hand, as it was given, with emotion. He almost sobbed as he unclasped it, turned away his head, and again concealed his face.

“ But,” continued Mr. Grey, “ that I do feel indignation—the greatest indignation, I will not deny. I believe that my daughter is innocent of all she is accused. If there has been malice, it has been from some other quarter. Sophy never harboured a malicious—an ungenerous feeling in her heart ! She is quite innocent—utterly so !”

Lord Stoketon turned towards Mr. Grey as he spoke thus firmly and proudly. He looked at him for a moment, then seizing his hand, exclaimed, “ Thank you—thank you for that ! Heaven bless you, Sir ! I knew it was false—I knew it must be—I knew Sophy Grey was innocent !”

Mr. Grey was affected, and he could only thank Lord Stoketon, at the moment, by the cordial pressure of his hand. There was a pause, for both parties were affected, and for a few minutes unable to speak. Mr. Grey was the first to break the silence, and it was to ask Lord Stoketon for farther information.

I need not repeat all that passed ; but briefly relate the circum-

stances which have caused this abrupt and painful interview. It may be remembered that a marriage was talked of between Maria Pemberton and Frederic Barton. The reader may also remember the ill-natured remarks of Lady Dowton, at which Sophy had laughed; and which were afterwards repeated by Charlotte Daventry, with some addition concerning Lord Stoketon, just to amuse herself and Mr. Crawford, one morning, at Lady Dowton's expense. At the time, Charlotte Daventry could have had little idea of the serious results which would arise from what she probably viewed as an innocent amusement.

Frederic Barton was a friend of Lord Stoketon's. He was a young man of good principles, with warm and steady feelings: a mutual attachment existed between himself and Maria Pemberton. Maria Pemberton was plain, but agreeable, clever, accomplished, and amiable, with as much good sense as a large share of romance would allow. She had a mother who loved, and almost idolized her, and Maria Pemberton loved, and idolized in return. Had she been a beauty, every one would have raved of her enthusiasm; but she was plain, and people found out that her romance was rather silly.

When Frederic Barton proposed to her, she thought of her mother: she loved him, but she could not bear to leave her fond mother; and she made some excuse to delay the marriage for a year or two. The world meantime had nothing to do but to talk and wonder, and such reasons were invented for the delay as we have already heard from Lady Dowton.

These reasons had been refuted by Sophy Grey, but again repeated by Charlotte Daventry, as proceeding from Sophy, and again circulated by Lady Dowton, not only with the additions regarding Lord Stoketon, but with another, of Sophy's supposed attachment to Mr. Barton.

The calumny against her mother, and herself, came to the ears of Maria Pemberton. She was indignant, for her mother's sake. With a character such as hers, where high-wrought feeling was apt to take the place of sounder judgment, her course may be conceived. She concealed the truth from her mother, but immediately resolved to break off her engagement as the surest means of contradicting these reports. To none but Mr. Barton did she allege her reason. In vain he tried to dissuade her from such a cruel and useless mea-

sure. She was determined, and the greater the sacrifice, the more did she glory in it for the sake of her mother, on whom she thus inflicted pain by her efforts to defend her.

It was at this time, and shortly after the visit to Hilton, that Frederic Barton had seen Lord Stoketon, and had confided to him the cause of his unhappiness. Lord Stoketon's distress may be conceived, as he listened to the most circumstantial details of the unamiable character of the woman he loved; but he immediately resolved to restore the happiness of his friend, though his own was gone. He told Mr. Barton of his intentions, received his hearty expressions of gratitude, and set off to Weston in a pitiable state of agitation and distress.

He travelled all night, and reached Weston the next morning. Worn out with the tumult of his feelings, he was unable to be calm and composed as he had intended; but he concealed nothing from Mr. Grey: he actually sobbed with joy as Mr. Grey repeated his assurance, with a manner, in which there was no deceit, that he believed the accusation against Sophy to be altogether false. But Mr. Grey would not allow it to rest on his conviction alone. Sophy must be questioned, and the origin of the report, if possible, discovered.

Lord Stoketon left Weston after a two hours' conversation with Mr. Grey, and was to remain at the neighbouring town till he heard again from him. He would not trust himself to remain in the house and to see Miss Grey, till he knew on what footing he might meet her; but he left Weston in a state of comparative bliss to that in which he had entered it. He believed, lover-like, almost before a word had been said in her favour, that Sophy must be innocent. He was convinced, the moment he saw Mr. Grey, and heard him speak of a father's feelings.—Yes, Mr. Grey could not have spoken so, had not his daughter been as amiable as Lord Stoketon fondly imagined.

What followed his departure at Weston will be imagined. Mr. Grey sent for Sophy, told her all that had passed, and her unfeigned astonishment, no less than her assurances of innocence, were sufficient to convince her father, had he needed to be convinced, that it was as he hoped. Then followed the indignation, the sorrow, the dismay, and the surmises of how her name could have

been connected with these calumnies. Sophy remembered Lady Dowton's story—remembered repeating it some time after to Charlotte as a proof of the absurd gossip of Lady Dowton. Sophy was farther questioned as to what she had ever said about Lord Stoke-ton, and was no less surprised at finding how much she had been misrepresented; earnestly affirmed it was utterly untrue, was very unhappy, cried a great deal, and, when her father told her she had brought some of this upon herself by her inclination to gossip, she cried still more, and expressed her contrition—then asked what was to be done, looked at her father for assistance, and with bitter tears and sobs anxiously enquired whether Lord Stoke-ton was really gone—gone in anger, believing her capable of such wickedness.

Anne pitied Sophy to her heart—heard with indignation the charge against her—and, till she heard her father speak of his distress, she was even indignant with Lord Stoke-ton himself for having believed it.

We will not dwell on all that followed—suffice it to say, that, in a short time from his first painful visit at Weston, Lord Stoke-ton had the joy of seeing Maria Pemberton and Frederic Barton once more engaged to each other, and of finding himself again on his road to Weston.

Lord Stoke-ton arrived; Sophy saw him for a moment, left her mother and Anne to amuse one another, and then walked out alone whilst he and Mr. Grey were engaged in conversation. Perhaps Lord Stoke-ton began to grow inattentive, for Mr. Grey smiled, and said, “Perhaps you will like to walk?”

Lord Stoke-ton's answer was not quite audible; he was out of the room before Mr. Grey had even time to apologize for not accompanying him. Mrs. Grey's eyes wandered towards the window, and she had the comfort of seeing that Sophy was no longer alone, and she looked so happy that Mr. Grey caught the infection, smiled most good-humouredly, gave Anne a kiss, and said, as he patted her cheek, “Sad work this, Miss Anne!” and the work was so sad that he smiled again as he said, “Take care of yourself, Anne: I cannot afford to part with you too.”

We will leave it to the reader's imagination to discover all that was said in that tête-à-tête walk between Sophy and Lord Stoke-

ton. It is sufficient to say, that Lord Stoketon proposed and was accepted.

And what had become of Sophy's predilection for Captain Herbert? Had she quite forgotten him? It seems she had, for when Charlotte Daventry, after expressing over and over again her delight at dear Sophy's prospects, suddenly looked a little sad, and said, with a sigh, "Poor Captain Herbert!" Sophy neither blushed nor sighed. Charlotte withdrew her eyes, as she saw the smile brightening on Sophy's face at the distant sound of Lord Stoketon's voice—saw her little blush of joy as he entered, and perceived Lord Stoketon's animated glance at Sophy as he opened the door. She turned away her head, and in another moment left the room.

"Yes," said she to herself, as she ascended the stairs, "baffled for once! Such a blundering, good-hearted fool! What other man would have come over post-haste to accuse his mistress to her father, of telling a lie of his friend and ridiculing himself? Well, I have learnt one thing, never to trust again to what a simpleton may not do!"

"My dear Mrs. Grey, I do congratulate you with all my heart," said Lady Dowton, in the kindest, most affectionate manner, as she was shown into the drawing-room at Weston, about a week after Lord Stoketon's proposal.

Mrs. Grey knew that Lady Dowton had done some mischief by spreading disagreeable reports of Sophy, and she had declared, in the virtuous indignation of the moment, that she had no patience with her, and she did not care if she saw it. However, when Lady Dowton walked into the room and congratulated so kindly, and looked so very much pleased (as every one was indeed) that Sophy was going to be married, Mrs. Grey quite forgot her want of patience—extended her hand with the most cordial, happy smile on her face—begged Lady Dowton to sit on the sofa, for she was sure she must be tired; and overcame her displeasure so much, as to say, "You are very kind," and to tell her all, from the first hour of acquaintance down to that of his proposing, not forgetting the very doubts whether the wedding should be on a Monday or a Thursday.

Lady Dowton listened as never woman listened before, when the subject related neither to themselves nor their own concerns; and

when she had farther ascertained that Lord Stoketon was gone from Weston to see his mother and sister, and hasten the lawyers ; and that Sophy employed for the trousseau the same milliner she had always employed ; she took her leave without being much fatigued, or a ‘ sad invalid,’ for more than once during the visit. Mrs. Grey said, “ After all, she really is a good, kind creature ; so very fond of us all, and particularly of our dear Sophy.”

“ Mr. George Foley, ma’am,” said the servant, and in walked Mr. George Foley. He congratulated Mrs. Grey, as she expected he would, and she smiled so much and so often that there was no doubt whether condolences or congratulations were due. Mrs. Grey then inquired after Miss Foley, and remembered that Anne had some message for her, and Anne was sent for and obliged to come.

“ Who could dare to say she was unamiable ?” thought George Foley, as Anne entered. He was come on a visit of discovery of character, and who will give much for his assurances that his love should not blind him, when we find that one look was sufficient to make him say to himself, “ She is little less than an angel !”

Yes ! Mr. Foley, it is an easy thing for any happy deluded lover to say, ‘ I will not be blind !’ But when the very thing you love comes before you—when the very voice you love to hear speaks to you—the very eyes you love to look on are turned upon you—then it is not easy to remember such high resolves ; and, if George Foley in that morning visit forgot everything but that Anne Grey was the most perfect being he had ever seen, who will blame him ? or dare to say, that with all his good sense, he was unpardonably weak !

“ Yes,” thought he, as he rode home from Weston, “ it would be happiness indeed to win her affection !” and he spurred his horse in the eagerness of the thought, and the horse curveted and capered to remind him for a moment he was on horseback ; but he was an excellent horseman, and he soon forgot it again, and once more provoked his horse to caper and plunge, as he thought, “ It may be won ! Time and perseverance may touch the heart of Anne Grey !” and he galloped home, for he was very late. Anne Grey had kept him too long !

CHAPTER XXX.

“ Did you give the note ? ” said Charlotte Daventry, to her maid.

“ I did, Mam’selle. ” Charlotte Daventry smiled.

At length the wedding-day arrived. That day which many have looked for, longed for, sighed for, and repented of. All the due quantity of love had been made by Lord Stoketon and Sophy Grey : the due number of lovers’ walks taken, and the due number of delays gone through, from the dilatoriness and the precision of lawyers ; all lawyers had been duly sent (we will not say where, for it does not matter) by Lord Stoketon, and Sophy had made all the proper number of excuses for them. The trousseau had been ordered ; and the trousseau arrived ; and there were pretty gowns, and pelisses, and bonnets, and canezous sufficient to make any young lady, from the age of seventeen to five-and-twenty, ardently wish to be married, and most sincerely envy Sophy Grey ! There was white—bridal white—nothing so becoming ! There was beautiful, rich black velvet ! There was pretty, lively pink ; soft, sentimental blue : *vapeur*—most becoming of all becoming colours ! There were all these, and there were more. Oh ! happy bride elect ! Why do young ladies ever answer ‘ *No* ? ’

The trousseau had been duly looked at and admired by all the ladies in the house, and the neighbourhood. Every lady’s maid within a walk had just at that crisis been moved with the spirit of friendship for Mrs. Watson, or Mrs. Hickman, at Weston ; and all had seen the trousseau, and all had admired.

The favours were ready : white and silver : pretty emblems of love, where love is simple, unchanging, and poor. Why are there not golden favours ? Surely there should be this distinction made for the prudent, sensible marriages, which are planned on the wisest deliberations of chaperons—which are formed on considerations of rent-rolls, jointures, houses in town, and houses in the country—

which have nothing to do with hearts. Surely, for such as these, this glittering and appropriate distinction might be made. It would be a true emblem of the sensible and praiseworthy principles on which the marriage was planned. Let those who foolishly and rashly marry on love and esteem, retain the common badge of simple white ; but let not merit go unrewarded. Let golden principles have golden badges. Let them gain all possible advantage from their wisdom. Let their gold be displayed, for its merit is in display. It will not, like affection, make a peaceful home ; it was never meant to give quiet happiness ; it aspires to distinction, and must be blazoned forth. English justice will surely see the propriety of granting a peculiar badge for the weddings of the prudent, who, with praiseworthy zeal, sacrifice every feeling on the shrine of wealth. I am digressing from Sophy Grey, even though the wedding-ring had been procured, and Lord Stoketon had declared that never was such a little finger in want of a wedding-ring before.

Anne had wept and smiled, with that mixture of feelings which all perhaps have known on such occasions. She was very glad, and very sorry, and smiles and tears were the consequence : but smiles predominated, for Anne Grey was not selfish : and she had listened to all Sophy had to say and to feel on the occasion : she had praised Lord Stoketon, and he had praised her, and they had both praised Sophy ; and with delight she had heard him say how happy he was and ought to be. Charlotte Daventry had been glad and sorry too. She had said how dear and pretty she thought Sophy ! how charming ! how much in love Lord Stoketon was ! and Lord Stoketon had thought her a dear, good, affectionate girl, who was devotedly fond of Sophy.

At length, on a fine Thursday morning the bells of the church at Weston were set merrily ringing—the clergyman was in readiness—the party of friends, were dressed in all bridal elegance—the bride's-maids, simply and becomingly attired, were ready ; and the bride appeared, lovely, as brides should appear, and the bridegroom, poor man ! happy, awkward, and annoyed in his orthodox blue coat.

The bride turned a little pale, and then a little flushed, and at last, had just the right quantity of bright, becoming colour, and almost shed a tear, but not quite, for a smile came instead, and

chased it away ; the bridegroom was warned not to forget the ring, and all were assembled round the altar : ‘ I will,’ was uttered in a clear, low voice, and the new name written, and Sophy Grey was Sophy Grey no more ; and she turned her bright face to be looked on, and loved, and admired by the crowd of relations and friends surrounding her ; and they thought that Sophy Stoketon was still dearer and prettier than even Sophy Grey had been—and then the carriages were entered, and the house was reached. Sophy walked into her father’s house—her childhood’s home—her home no longer—and the bridal dress was changed, and the travelling dress took its place, and all crowded round her—the father, the mother, the sister, the brothers—all crowded round her to say good-bye—to look and look on that dear face once more—to feel that her fate was sealed—to pray that it might be a happy one ; to think that she was going away—away from them—away from her home—away with a stranger ! and tears and smiles were mingled, and fond looks, and long embraces—and a father’s mingled tear of joy and sorrow was on her cheek, and the sister’s tear, that vainly tried to be a smile, and the mother’s sobs ; and Sophy Grey left her father’s house—left it with the bright beam of joy and hope upon her brow—and another moment, the carriage door was closed, the last good-bye uttered—and Sophy was gone !

Oh ! how melancholy ! how lonely does the house appear, where but a moment before all has been interest and hurry ! Who has not experienced the deserted sensation, when those whom we have been accustomed to see are gone—when the agitation, the interest of parting is over ? The forlorn empty look of the room—the stillness—the work-box, the drawing materials, the music, all gone ; or perhaps one single thing left to remind us how all was—a flower, perhaps, that had been gathered and cast aside—the cover of a letter which had been scribbled over in the forgetfulness of the happy conversation.

Yes ! that was a melancholy, *happy* day for those who remained at Weston. To none, perhaps, so melancholy as to Anne. She had lost more than any. To all but her, Sophy Stoketon would be much the same as Sophy Grey had been, whenever she was again amongst them ; but to Anne it was not so. There is a degree of intimacy and communion of thought and feeling existing between

sisters that cannot remain unbroken after marriage. Pure and beautiful as is the tie of sisterhood, it is not right that it should continue in all its strictness and exclusiveness when marriage has divided them; for the husband has still stronger claims upon his wife, and it is impossible this can exist uninjured if the tie of sisterhood is retained in all its former power.

Anne Grey felt all this as she returned to the deserted room at Weston;—hers and Sophy's joint room, where Sophy had so lately been, and had kissed her, and asked her so often to write, and said that she felt as if Weston would always be her home—as if she should always love that room. Anne returned to it. How melancholy it looked! How different! how changed her whole life would be now! How changed Sophy's would be—perhaps not changed for greater happiness; could it indeed be changed for greater? No, Anne's long-suppressed tears might now be allowed to flow, as she thought with fond regret of the days gone by—the happy childish days with Sophy ever near her—Sophy's ready laugh—her joyous voice—Anne Grey wept, nor could she compose herself till a gentle knock at the door announced the entrance of Charlotte Daventry, and recalled her to the necessity of self-control.

The sight of Charlotte checked her tears, she scarce knew why; but she had been dwelling fondly upon days of happy childhood, of opening womanhood with Sophy, and she was at once recalled from her pleasing yet mournful vision by the sight of Charlotte.

“Dear Anne,” said Charlotte, “I thought how it would be. But you must not cry. Yet I know it is difficult to prevent it. Even I—I, who have so much less cause, am almost as foolish. But then you should think of Sophy's happiness—we all should. We should try to follow her example; she behaved so well! You see *she* did not cry—not even when she wished us all good-bye.”

Anne dried her tears. “No,” said she sadly, “I ought not to cry; but we will go down, Charlotte. We must be in good spirits this evening, and all our party will wonder if we are not—so let us go down.”

“Never was a prettier bride's-maid to a prettier bride,” said Charlotte, smiling at Anne, as they descended the stairs arm and arm. So thought George Foley, who was at the wedding. So thought Robert Dodson, who was also there.

Poor Robert Dodson! How did he bear the loss of his cousin Sophy?—Remarkably well; and Mrs. Dodson only looked grave and cross for one minute, when she heard that Sophy was going to marry Lord Stoketon.

“Anne will do just as well, and better indeed,” said she, to herself, “and I have always thought that Bob rather preferred her: ‘My wife’s sister, Lady Stoketon!’ ‘Viscountess Stoketon!’ sounds very well. Yes. I really am heartily glad!” and Mrs. Dodson went over to Weston to tell Mrs. Grey how heartily glad she was; to give Mr. Grey a hearty shake of the hand; and wish Anne, with all her heart, as good a husband in a little time.

Mrs. Dodson told Bob, when she went home, that she thought Anne Grey grew prettier every time she saw her, and Bob looked so happy, and coloured so deeply, as she said so, that Mrs. Dodson was quite satisfied, and thought the Greys were really excellent people—as nice a family as she knew anywhere—and as highly thought of in the world—Mrs. Dodson’s world of fashion!

“Yes! I have failed!” said Charlotte to herself that night as she retired to bed. “Yet, how could it be otherwise? no eyes, no ears, no attention for any other being. Fond, devoted simpleton! it was impossible. But still”—she paused an instant—“still, father, do not blame me yet. Do not say that I am guilty—that I am careless! Is there not married felicity? Yes, father, you know it: there is married felicity! A vain, conceited coxcomb still lives, and a vain conceited girl still lives, not the less that she is married. Yes! there is married felicity, heavenly boon! Father, wait awhile, for there is married bliss!” Charlotte Daventry smiled.

CHAPTER XXXI.

ANNE was no longer the one of two Miss Greys; she wrote Miss Grey on her mother’s cards, and sighed as she did so; and when Henry, who came home on the happy occasion, and had declared he thought a

wedding a monstrous dull thing,—not half the fun he had expected—said “Well, Anne! so you are Miss Grey now! Only think of that—Miss Grey!” as if he imagined the height of power and felicity lay in those words; she only gave a sigh, and looked towards the empty table where Sophy’s drawing book was wont to lie.

For the first few days and weeks, time passed heavily with her. She tried to say ‘how selfish!’ ‘how wrong it was to regret her loss so much!’ But how very easy it is to say how selfish we are, and to feel quite sure we will be so no more! and yet how very easy it is to go on being quite as selfish as ever! When we are crying and sighing over the absence of a friend who has gone away to be ten times as happy as if she were enjoying our society, it is so easy to say that ‘we ought to be glad;’ that ‘we are very wrong not to rejoice:’ yet still, as with other things that are the easiest in the world to say, it is the most difficult to practice.

There stands the empty chair; there stands the round table *minus* the figure of our pleasant companion; there is the long gravel walk which we pace up and down, without our friend to pace up and down with us, and beguile the tedium of wholesome exercise. Still worse does it seem if our friend has been a *useful* friend—a sort of domestic toady! there lies our book on the table at the other end of the room! we would give all we possess to have it in our hands; but where is the useful friend to give it us? There is our work! we would give a good deal to go on with it, having no other employment; but we got into a scrape in the morning: two immense knots, hard, involved, tight, and firm, as Gordian knots, must be unpicked before we can go on; and where is the useful friend to unpick them? We sigh bitterly—perhaps we groan in the anguish of our hearts; we know that our good, dear, useful friend and toady is exceedingly happy all this time—much happier than ever she dreamt of being when with us. How easy it is to say in such a case, ‘that we ought to be very glad!’ Yet who can help regretting? who ever thought of not being selfish? who would not resolve, even at that very moment, never, if possible, to let our useful friend leave us again?

Anne Grey said how wrong it was to regret Sophy’s loss; but still she could not help regretting; and when Sophy, in about a month after her marriage, returned to Weston for a week, she found that week the shortest that ever was spent. Oh! it was delightful to see

dear Sophy so happy to have her once more amongst them ! she almost felt that she never had loved her so much before. Anne felt the quick and easy flight of time. To the happy indeed, it flies swifter than the swallow ; but not so to the listless ennuyé : time to the ennuyé is like the high and insurmountable wall up which the snail lingers and dawdles in his toilsome progress ; and should he get to the top ! what then ? why he must toil down again ; and away he goes, creeping, slipping, sliding, slowly as ever ; till some mischance befalls him !—he looses his hold—and down he falls, to the river that flows dark, cold, and deep below. Snail and ennuyé !—they both get their falls—the one in the water—the other in the grave. In vain they turn with regret, the one to his wall,—the other to his time, despised, mispent and lost !

Anne Grey had experienced the quick and the slow progress of time. When Sophy was absent it had passed heavily ; but Sophy was come, and never did a week fly so rapidly. She and her husband departed, and Anne was left again to muse on time past and present, and to feel more lonely than ever, after the short, happy week spent in their society.

A little vexation occurred to vary the monotony of existence, and if, as a wise man avers, “ the greatest pleasure in life consists in being beloved,” how supremely happy might she have been.

One morning, Mr. Robert Dodson walked into the drawing-room at Weston : Mrs. Grey not being there, he proceeded to his cousin’s morning-room ; the comfortable busy looking room where Anne and Sophy sat in the morning, working, drawing, playing, or reading ;—where stood Anne’s harp—where stood the small piano-forte, Mr. Grey’s present to them one happy new-year’s-day (when the rents had paid well), for their own private room and morning practice : and there stood the table, covered with pretty and useful things—there stood the drawing-table with the half finished drawing, and the open portfolio leaning against the light chair by its side : there stood, on another table, the flower rising from the moss in a pyramid of rosy blossoms ; and on the ground was set the basket filled with gaudy-coloured worsteds : there, drawn to the fire, stood the comfortable arm-chair, and the still more comfortable one with long back and no arms : there the small, neat book-case, filled with

books both useful and ornamental : against the walls hung the framed drawings ; the chefs-d'œuvre of Anne and Sophy. There too hung the likenesses of all the family of Greys, in small gold frames, which half concealed the miniatures they were meant to adorn. There from that comfortable busy room the sun was visible, gaily streaming over the smooth short grass, the bright clumps of flowers, the sloping lawn, the graceful trees, the verdant shrubs, the distant hills, and the river which roamed through the farther valley.

It was into this happy looking room that Mr. Dodson was ushered. He was infected with the matrimonial contagion. He saw Sophy Grey turned into a happy wife. He saw Lord Stoketon looking happier than any one ever looked before ; and if Robert Dodson was not a sensible man, he at least felt and behaved like one at present, for he thought such happiness was not to be despised. As he entered, he found, not his cousin Anne, but Charlotte Daventry.

“ I thought Anne had been here, ” said he, after greeting her.

“ No, ” said Charlotte ; “ here am I in solitary blessedness ! but Anne is only gone to look for a book, and she will be here again in a moment. Yes ! ” said she, smiling archly at him, “ and perhaps she would come directly, even without her book, if she knew who was here. Poor Anne ! ” and Charlotte smiled again, and looked significant. Robert Dodson smiled, coloured, sat down—got up again, and said, “ Do you think she would ? I don't know—I wish I knew— ” And again he seated himself.

“ ‘ Faint heart never won fair lady, ’ ” said Charlotte-Daventry, in a quiet, half laughing, little voice. “ But, I will go and look for her. ”

“ Miss Daventry ! ” said he, getting up and trying to call her back—“ Miss Daventry ! ” but Charlotte was gone—and in a few minutes Anne and Charlotte entered. Anne had no book in her hand ; she looked pleased, and said she was glad to see her cousin, and then sat down to her drawing. In a few minutes Charlotte said she must search for a letter she had to answer, and giving a little comic look at Mr. Robert Dodson, left the room.

In a few minutes more, Mr. Robert Dodson was just peering over Anne's drawing—then he seated himself in a chair close to her's, and said he wished he had one of her drawings—was very readily

promised one when it was finished—"This very one, if he liked." He should like that—anything of hers; and turned away his head—coloured—got up—went and looked out of the window—came and sat down again, and said, "How pretty Sophy looked when she was married!"

Considering that Sophy had been married more than two months, and that he had seen Anne several times since, that was rather a stale remark. Anne smiled a little, said she certainly did look very pretty, and very composedly went on with her drawing; but as nothing followed the remark, she looked up at Mr. Robert Dodson in some little surprise, and still more was she surprised to see him looking confused, and at length saying, "Yes, she looked very pretty, and very happy, *I* thought."

"Yes," said Anne, suspecting her 'good cousin Bob must have lost his intellects. "Yes, that she certainly was."

"And, I dare say, she *will* be very happy," said he, again looking wistfully at Anne's drawing, or at the little white hand employed upon it. "I dare say people are very happy when they marry," said he, raising his eyes to her face, and as quickly withdrawing them again, as Anne turned to see what he could be meaning.

"Yes," said Anne, "some people, I should hope, are very happy when they marry; and Sophy, I trust," added she laughing, "will be one of these happy ones. I should think that she and Lord Stoketon had an excellent chance."

"Lord Stoketon is a happy man!" said Robert Dodson, not looking at Anne, and heaving a deep sigh. "What," thought Anne, beginning at last to fancy she understood him: "is cousin Bob going to be sentimental! Is he actually wearing the willow for Sophy?" There was something so nearly ludicrous in the idea of Bob Dodson's being sentimental, that Anne found it difficult not to laugh,—this difficulty made her blush. "Can it be," thought she, "that he was in love with her? But I ought not to laugh—for I pity him if it were so. Still I hope he is not going to make me his confidante;" and she continued her drawing, feeling a little embarrassed; and tried to turn the conversation away from Sophy, and Lord Stoketon, and the willowed heart.

But he was bent on proceeding. He looked up and saw her blush—it gave him courage. "Lord Stoketon is a happy man!"

and he sighed again. "I envied him at the wedding. I thought the bride very pretty—very lovely indeed!" added he, with a sigh, "and so they all said; but do you know," and he looked on the ground for a minute, "do you know, Anne, what I thought?"

Anne's face grew still hotter: she thought it was really coming, and she should have to listen to a confession of love for a married woman from Robert Dodson.

"Do you know," said he, looking up at her with a very tender expression, "*I* thought somebody else much prettier!"

"Did you?" said Anne, raising her head, pleased to find herself out of the expected scrape. "Did you?" said she, looking at him and half laughing; but quite astonished when she saw his look of confusion—his delight as she turned towards him.

"Why, what can it be?" thought she. "Oh! perhaps another confidence: perhaps," and she wondered she never had thought of it before, "perhaps he is in love with Charlotte." She had not long to wait.

"*I* thought some one much prettier—much prettier than everybody else, indeed; and I always do, at all times. Yes, I see you understand what I mean. I thought you were ten times prettier than Sophy, and I wished that you were going to be married too," he continued, with increasing courage, and not to be mistaken *empressment* of manner and look, as Anne turned away and blushed deeply in utter dismay and vexation as that '*you*' revealed the secret. She was vexed, thoroughly mortified, and deceived.

"Yes," said he, looking at her, "I envied Lord Stoketon. I wished that I was in his place then, and you in Sophy's. I never dare tell you before—I never dare ask you," continued he, growing more energetic every minute, as Anne's continued silence and blushes seemed to assure him of her approbation. "But you must have seen it long ago. You were so kind! but I never should have spoken had not——"

Anne stopped him. She had at first been too much surprised and confused to think what to say. But she now recollected herself, and quietly and calmly she begged him not to proceed. She said, she feared she could not misunderstand him: that she wished it had not been so. Robert Dodson put in a word about his love—his ardent love—his hope she would return it.

“No, no,” said Anne, “do not say any more, cousin Robert. It is all a mistake. Indeed you are mistaken in thinking what you do. Let me hope you do not mean all you are saying. You love me, I hope, as a cousin—as I have always loved you; let us go on loving one another in this way.”

She put out her hand to him. He hesitated for a moment; but then his better nature prevailed. He took her hand.

“Yes,” said she gently, and with a kind, yet firm voice, “let us go on loving one another as cousins. I shall try to forget what you have said to-day, and you will forget it too—you will soon forget that you ever thought of me but as a cousin.”

“No, no,” said Robert Dodson, dropping her hand: “I shall never forget!” and he leant his head on the table. “I am very wretched,” said he, looking up. “I have been a fool but you have made me very miserable!—No! I never shall forget to love you. I always shall! I always have!”

Anne was very sorry—very much perplexed to know what to do, or say; and just then, when she despaired of making Mr. Robert Dodson less miserable, without giving him false hopes, the door opened, and Mrs. Grey walked in.

“Robert!” said she. “I did not know you were here. I’m very glad to see you.” But poor Robert Dodson was not in a state to speak, much less to be glad of anything at that moment.

Mrs. Grey perceived it. “Why, Anne, is anything the matter?” said she, looking at her inquisitively. Anne blushed; just muttered in reply, “I don’t know;” and walked out of the room. Mrs. Grey began to guess: she put one or two apposite questions, and she soon obtained the truth from Robert.

Mrs. Grey was a kind-hearted woman. She could not bear to see Robert Dodson unhappy, and she tried to comfort him. She said he must not despair: it was only a little nonsense of Anne’s: he must wait a little, and try again;—he must wait till she was a little older, in other words wiser, and knew her own mind better: and poor Robert at last went home a much less miserable man than he expected. He still hoped that his cousin Anne would learn to like him, and that it would end happily by her becoming Mrs. Robert Dodson.

Mrs. Grey and hope had whispered kind words to him, and, if

they were delusive, still they were pleasant. Let us all hope and believe as Robert Dodson did. Disappointment is scarcely so bitter as hopelessness; and if our wishes should not be fulfilled, after all have we not gained? We only come at last to the melancholy truth which we might have known long before. We have been enjoying days, or years of happiness to which we had no right. But are they less charming on that account? Oh no! Let us then when 'Hope tells a flattering tale,' believe its enchanting whispers. Let us, with Robert Dodson, contentedly submit to something disagreeable, because we hope for something very agreeable; and let us envy him as he rode home that day from Weston, a rejected yet a hopeful lover.

When Robert Dodson was gone, Anne was severely lectured by Mrs. Grey, as if it had been her, and not Robert Dodson who had just done a foolish thing: she was asked, "Why she had been so unkind to poor Robert? Why she did not wish to marry him?"

Anne said how sorry she was that she could not like him sufficiently; but that so it was. Mrs. Grey begged her not to be foolish, and always throw away her chances of happiness in this way—begged she would be kind in her manner to poor Robert, and let him perceive no difference: he had promised she said, very good-naturedly, that it should make no difference in his feelings. If no such person as Mr. George Foley had existed, Mrs. Grey might have been still more severe upon her; but Robert Dodson was certainly less desirable for a son-in-law than George Foley; and Mrs. Grey was therefore less displeased than might have been expected, considering the serious nature of her daughter's offence.

Poor Anne was much annoyed by what had passed. She was sorry on Robert Dodson's account: she had always liked him as a good-hearted youth, whose stupidity she could easily overlook for the sake of his kind disposition; and it was disagreeable to her to cause him pain, or to view him in any other light than as their affectionate cousin.

But she was still more mortified by her mother's manner. She saw with surprise that Mrs. Grey blamed her for not accepting him, and that even now she had scarcely given up the idea that she certainly ought to marry him, and that in course of time she probably would. She was annoyed at it; but Anne was never meant for a

heroine; and instead therefore of fretting herself and the family into a fever by fine bursts of sentiment, indignation, and ill-humour, she went on contentedly and cheerfully, although she had refused a wealthy lover—although she feared his proposing a second time—and although she dreaded that her mother, and perhaps both her parents, would be very angry if she did not accept him.

CHAPTER XXXII.

PERHAPS it will be supposed that Anne Grey was alike insensible to pleasure and to pain. That she was one of those excellent stupid people, who really are so very good, that we find it the hardest thing in the world to love them : whom, in fact, we never do love with our heart, only with our reason : whom we even find it the hardest thing not to dislike, if they are much thrown in our way. Could we but discover some little weakness—some one little point which could make either their eyes sparkle, their cheeks redden, or their tongues utter an involuntary exclamation—we could then forgive them all the rest—we should be saved at once from dislike, and, perhaps, might even begin to love them.

Anne Grey never put any one to this test. Though she could cheerfully submit to unavoidable evils, she was perfectly alive to the sensation of pleasure—was quite capable of uttering hasty exclamations of delight—of having her heart beat with joy, and her eyes sparkle with happiness. She really had emotions, in proof of which, she was actually in a flutter of pleasure one morning on the arrival of a letter to Mr. Grey.

This animating letter was merely from Mr. Temple, and its contents nothing more than a proposal to come to Weston, if convenient to Mr. and Mrs. Grey.

Nothing could be so convenient as Mr. Temple's coming. Mrs. Grey had been longing to have the house filled with company ;—there really were so many people they ought to ask ; it was quite

shameful they had not been asked long ago ! She only wanted an excuse to make this evident to Mr. Grey, for she was not quite certain that it would be so clear to him ; but now Mr. Temple had invited himself. He could not come to a family party. Some one must meet him, and she easily gained Mr. Grey's consent to invite as many of their acquaintance as the house would hold.

Will it be believed that Edward Temple, who could condescend to talk so much and so agreeably to little simple Anne Grey, was really a great personage ? The world of fashion would hardly have denied his claim to that distinction. Napoleon had been a greater man, certainly—Walter Scott had, perhaps, been a greater man—Beau Brummel, no doubt, in his day, had been by some considered a greater man—but still Edward Temple was a great man, and Mrs. Grey was so delighted that the all-admired Mr. Temple should have proposed to come to Weston, that she ordered the carriage, and drove over to see her dear cousin, Mrs. Dodson.

Perhaps she mentioned his name in that visit ! Be that as it may, Mrs. Dodson and she talked a good deal about Robert Dodson and Anne. They said it was a foolish affair. Mrs. Grey apologized for Anne—said she was young and did not know her own mind, but no doubt in a little time would be wiser ; she was rather more discreet than she otherwise might have been, as she thought of Mr. George Foley, and of Edward Temple's visit ; but still she ventured to say, that she hoped poor dear Robert would not take it much to heart, and would not despair.

Mrs. Dodson said, that poor dear Robert certainly did rather take it to heart, but she thought he would soon get up a better spirit, and she had no doubt it would all be well, and Anne would know her own interest better in a little time ; and Mrs. Dodson's forbearance and friendliness on the subject did her great credit.

Mr. Temple came to Weston. A party was invited on the occasion. The Foleys unluckily were gone from home for a fortnight. It was very unfortunate ! Poor Mrs. Grey had relied upon them. She was, to tell the truth, with all her delight, a little nervous about Mr. Temple's visit. She was afraid of not having lords and ladies, and fashionable people enough to meet him. I am sure any good kind of country gentleman's wife will sympathize with her at this moment. They all may have felt the strange mixture of pleasure

and pain combating in their minds when some great man or woman of society—some one a little superior to themselves, has deigned to offer himself as their guest. What good kind of woman has not felt in a *fidget*, and wished that the honour and the pleasure were more synonymous?

Just so felt Mrs. Grey! It was a great honour to have Mr. Temple, but still, what were her exclamations and remarks beginning with 'I wish,' which means, 'I have something to fear'—what were her remarks to Mr. Grey on the subject? "Oh! Mr. Grey! how I wish we had got a party to meet Mr. Temple! I wish, my dear, we had got those new chairs in the drawing-room! I wish, my dear, I knew whether Mr. Temple ever eats veal, because Fowler says there is nothing to be had for the top dish the first day but veal! I wish, Mr. Grey, we had a man cook! I wish we could know whom he would like to meet! I wish, my dear, those lamps would burn better in the dining-room. The last time we had company they gave no light at all! a pair of tallow candles would have given as much!" And many, many more, were Mrs. Grey's wishes, hopes, and fears, on the subject. Mr. Grey listened to them with a patient, enduring face, and whether he attended to them or not is a matter of no importance.

"I wish to goodness that the Foleys had come!" added Mrs. Grey. She had thought of the Foleys directly, as suitable people to meet him, and it was so unlucky that they were gone out. "Really gone! Are you quite sure, Mr. Grey, that he says not to be back before Wednesday?—Yes, I see," said she, with a heavy sigh, as she looked over Mr. Foley's note, and saw that there was no possibility of reading it with a different meaning.

"Well, we can have Lady Dowton, and Sir John, if he is at home. Mr. Temple knows Lady Dowton, and I saw he talked to her a little at Chatterton."

"My dear, what does it signify," said Mr. Grey, "whom we have? Mr. Temple is coming to see us—not to see people he can meet every day of his life if he chooses. Ask those whom it is our turn to ask. You told me there were several people we ought to invite, so now is your time. As we are going to have the bore of company, let us get off all the civilities at once."

"Well, my dear Mr. Grey, I am sure, I am very anxious to

do so. I did not think you would have been so cross about it."

Mr. Grey's placid smile showed how *very* cross he was liable to be.

"I wish to get a pleasant party to meet Mr. Temple, if I can," continued she. "He is used to such smart people."

"I am afraid you will not find many in this neighbourhood," said Mr. Grey, smiling. "But settle it yourself. I leave it to you, my dear. I shall be quite satisfied, and so will Mr. Temple, I dare say, with whoever you choose to ask."

Poor Mrs. Grey did settle it as well as she could. The day arrived, and Anne wondered why she felt so particularly shy at the thought of a party at home; she told herself it must be because Sophy was not there to be 'Miss Grey.' Mr. Temple came, and she blushed so deeply when he arrived, that, as she ascended the stairs to her own room, she said to herself, "How foolish! how provoking! What might he not have thought of it?" She remembered what Charlotte had said concerning his preference for her, and her coldness of manner to him. She wished that Charlotte had never uttered a word on the subject, for she felt so awkward. She was sure he did not care for her, and if that were the case, he could not care how cold her manner was.

Whilst these thoughts were passing in her mind, her toilet was completed, and she descended to the drawing-room with the persuasion that nothing was so awful as walking into a room before dinner.

As she entered, she saw Mr. Temple talking to her cousin. Charlotte looked better than Anne had ever seen her before. It was strange, but even her manner seemed improved—her complexion brightened—her eyes more beautiful.—Then her dress was perfect, and her figure, which was always good, but not always shown to the best advantage, from her negligence of dress, was now displayed to the greatest advantage. Anne was quite struck with her appearance, and she could scarcely keep her eyes from her. Perhaps it was because she had no longer Sophy to compare her with, but Charlotte certainly looked decidedly handsome. Her manner likewise, quiet, and lady-like, yet filled with animation and grace, as she sat smiling, talking, or listening to Mr. Temple.

Anne saw that he was struck with her. He never moved when she entered; he seemed perfectly engrossed, and went on conver-

sing with evident interest and animation. Anne felt for a moment a little pang—a strange sensation—but it was soon subdued, and she turned away her eyes, and devoted herself to Mrs. Cunningham, who, with Mr. Cunningham, and two out of the three ‘very different,’ or as some one said, ‘very *indifferent*’ Miss Cunninghams, were staying in the house. It was unlucky that Anne asked Miss Cunningham after herself, and talked to Miss Mary Cunningham about her younger sisters: it was a strange mistake, as they were so ‘very different.’

Dinner over, the ladies quitted the dining-room, and in about half an hour after, the approach of the gentlemen was heard.

Anne wondered whether Mr. Temple would come and talk to her, or whether he would again devote himself to Charlotte. She tried, as the door opened at the other end of the room, to talk to Miss Mary Cunningham, and not to care whether Mr. Temple spoke to her or not. She sat with her back to the door, so that she could see no one as they entered, and there was a long room to be crossed before the procession of gentlemen could reach her, if any were even so inclined. Charlotte Daventry sat behind her, more in the middle of the room. Anne tried not to listen for Mr. Temple’s voice, and to talk very steadily to Miss Mary Cunningham. She was kept some time in suspense. She heard some one ask Charlotte what her work was, and wonder how ladies could work! That was not Mr. Temple. Then she heard the beginnings of various talkings. Heard an arm-chair wheeled a little nearer to the fire, or to the table, or to some one’s seat. “That is Mr. Temple,” thought she; and she asked Miss Mary Cunningham, for the second time that evening, whether she had ridden much lately.

Yes—Anne gave it up! He would not talk to her it seemed. That had evidently been his arm-chair, perhaps drawn comfortably towards the fire, with the intention of remaining there for the evening, in a silent mood—a practise, she had heard, was not very uncommon with him when not well pleased with the company. She began to think how foolish she had been to believe a word that Charlotte had said; when Miss Mary Cunningham, whose head was turned towards the door, began to bridle up. Anne read in that movement that some one was coming. Yes, a chair was drawn near her own.

“ You have forgotten your promise, Miss Grey,” was said in a voice she did not mistake. She turned her head. It was Mr. Temple. “ You have forgotten your promise, Miss Grey.”

“ What promise ?” said Anne, bending over her work.

“ I had hoped,” said he, “ you would not have required to be reminded of it. No,” he continued, “ I cannot tell you. I have no right to remind you. I only can see and *feel*,” he added, lowering his voice, “ that you have forgotten it.”

The colour rushed to Anne’s face as he said this. She remembered the promise, at least, she remembered his asking her to promise never to meet him again as if he were a mere acquaintance—to meet him in future as a friend. In a moment she forgot Charlotte Daventry !

He went on ; but, who would suppose that he would not go on—that he would do otherwise than draw his chair towards her with the intention of conversing ?

I am not going to repeat a word more of his conversation, though it lasted some time. Charlotte Daventry looked at them once or twice during its continuance. Once there was a peculiar expression on her countenance as she looked. Could that be a frown from dear good Charlotte Daventry ? Oh, no ! it could not have been ; for when Anne moved from her seat to sing, and Mr. Temple, after sitting some time listening to Anne’s singing, seated himself by her side, she showed how difficult it would be for her to frown. She sat in smiling, quiet gracefulness, as she spoke and listened. There was a gentleness, mingled with animation, about her manner, that had never before been discernible. Anne’s thoughts were not intent on her as they had been at first that evening, and, when at length her attention was attracted, she only felt pleasure at seeing her cousin apparently liked by one whose judgment she valued.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

“GRATITUDE is an overpowering feeling,” said Charlotte Daven-try, in continuation of a conversation with Mr. Temple, during one of the Miss Cunninghams’ performance on the piano-forte. “Gratitude is an overpowering feeling. It must either exist intensely, or not at all. It must engross all other feelings, or it cannot exist.”

“Do you think then,” said he, “that gratitude would render us blind to the faults of those towards whom it is due?”

Charlotte hesitated—at length she said, with some emotion, “We must wish it should; yes, I should say it ought to do so. Are we not guilty of a *crime*?” she said, eagerly looking at him, as if anxious, *very* anxious for his opinion. “Are we not guilty of a *crime*, even if we do not blind ourselves to the faults of those who have a claim on our gratitude?”

“I cannot think so,” said he, regarding her calmly, perhaps with scrutiny.

“You think not,” said she, eagerly, as she actually bent forward to listen for his answer. “You think not!” Her eyes expressed pleasure, but that expression soon faded.

“No! but it cannot be so. You have never considered the subject seriously, anxiously. You never have had occasion to consider it—as—” she checked herself—“as some may have had,” she added, “I was mistaken in thinking”—she stopped herself again. “Yes,” said she, “I know it is right to feel gratitude so strongly as to preclude the exercise of every other feeling. It is a crime”—and she put her hand before her eyes, as she uttered this word, and a slight shudder was just perceptible. “It is a crime not to be blind to every failing in those who have a right to expect our gratitude.” She paused for a moment, as if occupied with painful emotions, and then continued, “Oh! it is easy for those who have never lain under a sense of obligation to speak lightly of it—to say

it is not a duty! But it is an overpowering duty. Easy, perhaps, to those who begin by love—who can esteem—admire—who are loved—who are not reminded”—she stopped, and then said, in a lighter tone, “It must, I should think, be easy in such cases to be grateful. It cannot be such an overpowering feeling as I should suppose it to be in others,” she added, laying a stress on the word ‘suppose,’ and just glancing at Mr. Temple, as if she were anxious he should perceive she only spoke of an imaginary case—“and yet,” continued she, as she saw his face betokened no signs of applying what she had said, as she feared it might be applied, “and yet the duty is as great in one case as in the other. The faults, numerous though they may be, should not be discovered—even though the favour was bestowed grudgingly, unwillingly—though it is continued from necessity alone—still the obligation for gratitude is the same. What a sin it is! how terribly self-upbraiding must that person’s feelings be who could not blind herself to the faults and failings of those who bestow the favour!”

She stopped—emotion betrayed itself as she finished, and for a while she seemed completely occupied and abstracted by the thoughts she had conjured up. She put her hand before her eyes—then slightly starting, as if recollecting herself, she looked up, tried to laugh, said something about the way in which a subject carried her on, saw Edward Temple look at her rather inquisitively, and blushed deeply.

“You will think,” said she, trying to be gay, “that I have some person in my head—but you know, it is easy to conjure up imaginary cases. It is very easy! I am, I believe, given to do so. I often conjure up cases, and on this very subject—it was odd that we should have been speaking on this subject.”

“Perhaps not,” said Edward Temple, “as you say it is one you often think of, and you began it yourself.” Charlotte coloured still more violently, and turned away her head, as she saw him look at her with an intelligent smile on his face.

Perhaps she was hurt by his manner. She might have thought him wanting in consideration for her evident confusion; for, heedless of her embarrassment, he continued for a few minutes regarding her attentively; and he added, as he withdrew his gaze, “Yes, I think it was a subject you yourself began. It is one indeed that I

have little reason to think or talk about," said he, carelessly, "for I have no one to be grateful to, thank goodness!—Except," he added, turning with an air of gallantry towards her, "it is to Miss Daventry at this moment for allowing me the pleasure of talking to her."

"That is a pleasure," said Charlotte Daventry, without the slightest coquetry of manner, "that is a pleasure which it seems I have bestowed so willingly that it lays claim to no gratitude. So Mr. Temple," said she, smiling, "according to your own confession, you are relieved from the necessity of gratitude to any one."

"And you would regard that, Miss Daventry, as a happy exemption?" said he, smiling, and looking inquisitively at her.

A flush passed across Charlotte's face, as he spoke and looked at her with a kind of privileged scrutinizing ease. Her answer was made quietly, and, though free from anger, was such as seemed to rebuke the freedom, if not heartlessness of the question. "Few people," said she, lowering her voice, and averting her eyes as she spoke, "few people would have asked such a question of me."

Edward Temple felt it—he was struck for an instant with the consciousness of having been unjust. He was grieved, to have asked the poor dependent orphan whether she thought the exemption from gratitude a happiness! It was indeed cruel, if undeserved; and, deserved or not, he saw that it was felt. It had been rebuked, calmly, pointedly, and with dignity—some proof that it had not been deserved.

Edward Temple was staggered in his pre-conceived opinion, and his voice and manner showed his consciousness that he had been unkind: when next he spoke, it was with something almost of kindness in his voice. Charlotte Daventry looked up, and at that moment, if not before, Edward Temple must have felt his injustice, for he saw the tear standing in her eye, as she thanked him by her look for the change of his manner.

But the wound had been given—the feelings had been hurt. And in vain did Mr. Temple exert his powers of conversation. In vain did he try, by his lively endeavours to amuse, to dispel the recollection of his unkindness. She was apparently making an effort to seem attentive, and to conceal the depression of spirits which those

few words of his had caused, but evidently unable to overcome the painful recollections they had recalled. She remained serious and almost silent. Edward Temple saw that she wished to be left—that she wished at least that he should not continue to talk to her; and he left her, with a strong feeling of self-upbraiding, which was not a little increased by perceiving shortly after that she had quitted the room.

“How unaccountable!” thought he, “and yet even now may it not all be deceit? A mere finished piece of acting! No,” thought he, as he looked at Anne Grey’s calm and lovely countenance, as she sat listening to Miss Cunningham’s bad playing, without one gesture of impatience, or one look of ridicule to account for her patient attention, “there cannot be falsehood there. Truth and kindness are too plainly written! I have been duped,” he continued, after a minute’s thought, whilst intently studying the countenance of Anne; “I have been completely duped! after all my caution!” He half smiled. “Duped by a finished piece of acting!” and the next moment he was by the side of Anne Grey.

“Your cousin has left us,” said he; “Miss Daventry has disappeared.”

“Disappeared!” said Anne, looking round.

“Yes,” replied he, “I heard her say ‘Good-night.’ She was tired, or not well, or something, I believe.” Anne’s face of concern was just what Edward Temple expected, and, be it known, what he wished to see.

“I hope she is not ill,” said Anne; and she left the piano-forte, the Miss Cunninghams—and Mr. Temple—looked the fear she felt, that Charlotte Daventry was ill, and left the room.

“I knew it!” thought Edward Temple, and he seated himself with his back to Miss Cunningham, not the least aware that she was in the finale of her first-rate song.

“I knew how it would be! There was proof in that kind, pitying look; and I have done well, if she has any feeling—any touch of remorse; I have sent the best tormentor to her.”

“Mr. Temple,” said Mrs. Grey, “I beg your pardon—but I think Miss Cunningham is looking for the book you have there.”

Mr. Temple started at the sound of Mrs. Grey’s civil apologetic voice. He got up and gave the book to Miss Cunningham, and then

remembered to turn his face towards the instrument and the performer.

Anne returned in about a quarter of an hour. He looked at her as she entered. She was grave, and there was something of sorrow and of pity in her look.

“I hope Miss Daventry is not ill?” said he, as she returned to the music party.

“No, she is not ill, thank you,” said Anne, “but she was a little overcome. Charlotte, though she appears so lively and thoughtless,” said she, after a few minutes’ pause, “has a great deal of feeling. Unhappily, perhaps for her! Little things affect her at times—one scarcely knows why—except, indeed,” added she, “that it is easy to believe under such a melancholy situation as hers how readily every little thing may affect her.

“I who am so happy,” she continued, half smiling through the sadder expression which rested on her countenance, “have so little reason to understand her feelings, that I am often fearful of wounding them from ignorance or inadvertence—not that I cannot sympathize with her, for my own happiness makes me more alive to the sense of what it must be to be deprived of it. It appeared, from what she let fall, that something had occurred to agitate her this evening.—Poor thing!” said she, with a compassionate voice: “she is indeed to be pitied! No affection, no care, no kindness can supply the place of that she is deprived of!”

“I believe you did not know her father?” said Edward Temple.

“I see you think,” said Anne, looking at him as he spoke, “that my cousin is not to be pitied for the loss of such a father. But he was devotedly fond of her, and she was probably blind to his faults. She had no occasion to know them; for they were not faults against her. She, I know, was attached to him with no common devotion. She had only him to love, for she lost her mother when almost an infant. A child is indeed to be pitied who has no parent!” She sighed, and was silent for a moment. Edward Temple read with delight in her expressive countenance the feelings which had made her pause, and of which he had just before been almost deceived into believing her incapable.

Miss Cunningham’s performance was at an end; and Anne was

to say something civil, to ask for another song, and to be refused with becoming diffidence; and thus closed the scene.

And now what shall we say, when we hear that Anne actually remained awake that night, to ask herself, what we all know by this time, ‘whether she was in love with Mr. Temple?’ ‘Whether, if she were in love with him, it was wrong in her to be so?’ and lastly, ‘whether, after all, Edward Temple was a marrying man?’ If Edward Temple had been asked that question, what would he have answered? “Let me wait,” he would perhaps have said, “till I am safe away from Weston, and then I will tell you.”

CHAPTER XXXIV.

CHARLOTTE Daventry’s manner, the next morning, showed no traces of the agitation which Anne had witnessed with sorrow on the preceding evening. When she had then gone up to her room, she had found her in evident emotion, and as Anne kindly questioned her as to the cause, she let fall some allusions to her desolate situation in the loss of her father, which revealed at once what had affected her.

Anne had often witnessed such emotion before, caused, as she believed, by some slight allusion to her situation, something which had touched on the chord of feeling—unconsciously perhaps to all but herself.

Charlotte kissed her cousin, and the tears, which had probably been suppressed before, began to flow as she leant on her neck, and thanked her over and over again for her kindness; and then, with considerate eagerness, begged her not to remain with her.

“Do not I know,” said she, “that *he* is here,” smiling through her tears. “Yes, yes, Anne, you must go, and leave me:” and as she was beginning to refuse, “yes, you *must* go. I had rather be left—indeed I had—it is better for me;” and she urged her

so much to return to the drawing-room, that Anne saw it was better to comply.

If Anne had been a real heroine she would have been delighted to have her duty and her pleasure so little at variance. She would, as she entered the drawing-room, and saw the hero's eyes still fondly resting on the door, the very door where last he had caught a glimpse of her receding figure;—she would, as she saw those eyes flash with animated joy on her return—as he advanced in eager delight one step to meet her;—she would, as she saw all this, have completely forgotten everything but the delight—the rapture of again beholding him—she would have completely forgotten that she left a poor unhappy cousin weeping up stairs.

But, though Anne, as she entered, saw Mr. Temple turn anxiously round, and though he spoke to her the moment she drew near, and had evidently been watching for her return—yet she did not, on this account, forget her sorrow for Charlotte Daventry, nor did she feel the true heroine-delight as she descended the stairs, but wished most sincerely that she might have been allowed to remain to comfort Charlotte, instead of returning to the drawing-room, even though Edward Temple was there.

However, on the morrow, Charlotte appeared with her usual cheerful, lively manner, and Mr. Temple hardly refrained from asking her whether the weight of gratitude was become more burdensome since the preceding evening? but he did refrain, and turned to talk to Anne.

During the day, Lady Dowton was happy enough to engage his attention. The Greys and Charlotte Daventry were all out of the room, and Mr. Temple actually sat down by her, to the amazement of Mrs. Cunningham and the two Miss Cunninghams, who all three would have given the world to have been even spoken to by him. Edward Temple and Lady Dowton had a long conversation, and in such a low confidential tone of voice, that it was sometimes almost hushed into a whisper. What could it have been about? Neither more nor less than Charlotte Daventry and the Greys.

“She plays most beautifully, I can assure you—but, poor thing! she never plays here.—No—that would not be quite allowed. It would interfere, you know. The Greys—I really am very fond of them.”

“ Yes, I see, ” said Mr. Temple.

“ But you know they have their little failings, ” continued Lady Dowton, “ who has not ? and perhaps, with regard to this poor girl—who is undoubtedly attached to them from gratitude—there is evidently a little jealousy. ”

“ Mr. Grey, I suppose ? ” said Mr. Temple. “ He and Miss Daventry would certainly clash. ”

“ Yes, exactly, ” said Lady Dowton, not understanding, but going on. “ There is a little jealousy, and Charlotte Daventry is not allowed by any of the family to do anything well. Her music—they all say, as you know, that she cannot play at all, and does not like it ; but the poor girl is passionately fond of it, and really plays beautifully. ”

“ You have heard her ? ” said Mr. Temple.

“ No, not exactly, but Miss Foley—”

“ Miss Foley ! ” said he, in a different manner, and with a little start.

“ Yes, Miss Foley was very sorry for her. ”—

“ And she heard her play, Lady Dowton ? ”

“ Yes, often at my house, ” was the reply. “ Often—and she is very fond of the poor girl, and very sorry for her. These little jealousies are very disagreeable in a family, Mr. Temple. You would scarcely suspect Anne Grey of such a thing—but a little sulkiness of temper, and this jealousy of others’ accomplishments go together in her—and she looks so quiet, and is so kind in her manner—such a very gentle manner—and I dare say she *may* feel a little,—but still for a poor thing in Charlotte Daventry’s situation, it is hard to bear. ”

“ Yes, ” said Mr. Temple. “ Miss Grey certainly has all the appearance of a person with whom it would be difficult to live. ”

“ Exactly, ” said Lady Dowton, thinking Mr. Temple, who was such a superior-minded person, must be right ; “ Exactly. ”

“ You have often seen her sulky, I suppose, Lady Dowton, as you live so near, and have known her from a child ? ” said Edward Temple.

“ No indeed, ” said Lady Dowton ; “ but my delicate health you know—” and she was sinking back in interesting languor. Mr. Temple saw it.

“ Perhaps you have heard, Lady Dowton—”

Lady Dowton was roused, 'you have heard perhaps,' betokened something to be heard.

"Perhaps you have heard the story about Mr. Grey and the poodle dog?"

"No, indeed! never!" said Lady Dowton, in an animated voice. "No, indeed!"

"Ah, well I thought you had known it. It is highly to Mr. Grey's credit, I assure you, and to Miss Grey's too. It proves most completely that the Greys are everything most kind and attentive to Miss Daventry, and that Miss Anne Grey has not the smallest particle of sulkiness or jealousy. I cannot tell you the story. I thought, as a friend of the family, you might have known it, otherwise I would not have named it. It was told me in confidence, and I must ask Lady Dowton, as a favour, that you do not mention the poodle dog—*that* is the particular thing which must not be named—besides which you perceive that to those who do not know the whole story, it would sound ridiculous. Of course the fact may be mentioned that there are well-grounded proofs that the Greys are free from all jealousy and want of kindness to Miss Daventry; and that Miss Anne Grey is not sulky—but has the sweetest temper in Christendom. *This* you must be at liberty to repeat, and there can be no harm in adding the very strong grounds of your own personal experience of her disposition. In short these reports are stale now. This of the poodle dog is the new version. I wish I was at liberty to relate the whole to you. But the inference is sufficient."

"Well, indeed," said Lady Dowton, "I always said and thought it must be so. I felt so sure Anne Grey was the sweetest tempered being in the world. I never had seen the slightest symptom of sulkiness or jealousy in her, though I have known her all my life; and towards Charlotte Daventry, in particular, I have always seen every mark of consideration."

"You must take care to let the world know this, Lady Dowton, for I can assure you, you have been named as circulating a story that was not quite correct. People were rather amused—excuse my saying so—you know what I mean."

"Oh! certainly," said her ladyship, colouring, and biting her lip.

"People were rather amused," he continued, "at your having

been duped by such a story. With all your opportunities of judging for yourself, that you should have been so completely deceived."

"Ah! thank you, Mr. Temple, you are very kind. Indeed I hated to think such a thing was true. Indeed I never believed it, and it was rather unjust to suppose I did."

"Very unjust indeed," rejoined he. "But the world, you know, Lady Dowton—the world is so scandalous! and you must take care and refute all that it believed you to have said. But I quite forgot that I was to walk with Mr. Grey," said he, jumping up. "I have been so agreeably led into forgetfulness,"—bowing to Lady Dowton, and Lady Dowton never felt quite so happy before as at such a compliment from Mr. Temple; and he left the room.

"Yes! bravo! Mr. Temple," said he, to himself. "You are a clever fellow, let the world say what it will. But I must know more! If Miss Foley said true, and she never would say what was not true! But Lady Dowton repeated it. Pshaw! why believe it for a moment? but it shall be proved, now or presently."

"Mr. Grey," said he, approaching Mr. Grey, "I have been looking everywhere for you. Lady Dowton's agreeableness,"—he smiled, and Mr. Grey smiled,—"Lady Dowton's agreeableness must be my excuse."

"A very lame one I fear," said Mr. Grey.

"Ah! well, never mind. Excuses are always good for nothing—never supposed to be worth anything. There would be no such word in our language if they were."

That evening Edward Temple devoted himself to Charlotte Daven-try. He showed less attention than usual to her cousin. Yes, he was very attentive to Charlotte, and Anne thought there was something very *empresé* in his manner to her. Charlotte never looked so well, so nearly beautiful. Nay, Anne thought there was something so much superior even to beauty in her appearance.

"Can it be?" thought she. "He spoke very strangely about her; he expresses such interest, and—" she thought for a moment—"and yet at times he speaks almost slightly of her. Perhaps he wishes to blind me by his manner." She felt a little twinge, and tried, as she had done the first evening of his arrival at Weston, not to care about it, and not to look at Charlotte and him.

It was true that his manner was peculiarly attentive to Charlotte Daventry. A vain girl might even have read something more in it ; but Charlotte Daventry we know was not vain. She believed he loved her cousin, and this must have saved her from any flattering illusions ; though she might well have been justified for entertaining such. Yes—we grieve to say it ! Edward Temple, by his manner that evening, laid himself open to the charge of fickleness. But do not let us censure him too hastily. We will not blame him yet ; we are only sorry that Anne Grey should have felt that it was so necessary for her peace of mind not to look that way oftener than she could avoid.

“ He is gained ! ” said Charlotte Daventry to herself, in her own room, as her eyes sparkled with triumph and delight. “ He is gained !—that tear—that meek, touching rebuke !—that little self-denying retirement, have effected what there was cause to despair of ! Yes—it was but a chance ! It required the nicest exercise of skill—but it has succeeded. Anne Grey,—sigh, blush and pine ! ” She smiled proudly, and then she sighed again with a softer emotion.

“ What a charm there is in music ! ” said Edward Temple to Charlotte Daventry, the next morning, after listening to a song of Anne’s.

Charlotte looked at him, and saw the enthusiasm of his admiration beaming in his countenance. Was it the song or the singer ? Music or the performer which called forth that enthusiasm ? the next minute was calculated to satisfy any one that although it was the song, and not the singer—music, and not the performer, which caused the enthusiasm, it would be easy for the song and the music to transfer the enthusiasm to the singer and the performer.

“ Music is quite a passion with me, ” said he. “ I could love any one, let them be old and ugly and disagreeable as—what shall I say, Miss Daventry ?—the oldest and ugliest and most disagreeable person you know—I could love them with all my heart if they played and sung well. My first question would be, if I were thinking of inquiring for a wife—is she a good musician ? and that question satisfactorily answered, all the others would follow of course. She might have beauty, agreeableness—all those thousand and one charms every unmarried woman is possessed of as a matter of course. They would be pleasant additions, certainly ; but I should

care very little about them. Do not you agree with me? Do not you feel that you never could fall in love with a woman who could not charm you by her voice or her fingers? Ah! I forgot, you cannot fancy yourself in love with a woman at all—and a man! *we* only listen to music. We seldom give proof of our talent and souls for music but in listening—I am sure you play and sing to perfection, Miss Daventry,” added he.

“What shall I say after hearing such an opinion on the subject?” said Charlotte, looking archly at him. “I will neither say yes, or no,” continued she, after pretending to think for a moment. “I *dare* not say no, and I *must* not say yes.”

“The only thing left for you then,” said he, “is to allow me to decide for myself—but, meantime, I will venture to say ‘Yes’ for you without any proof.”

“Thank you,” said Charlotte, laughing.

“You consent then,” said he. “You will let me hear you?”

“No—not now—perhaps some time : not now.”

She looked at Anne and Mrs. Grey, who were in the room; and said, with some confusion, and rather eagerly, “This is all nonsense. You know it was all nonsense, I was only in joke about my playing. You know, my aunt and cousin will tell you I cannot play at all. Yes indeed, Mr. Temple,” getting anxious, as she saw him look incredulous. “Yes, indeed, if you will ask they will tell you—but I had rather you should not say anything about it.”

“Your cousin and Mrs. Grey will say,” said he, “but will you let me ask yourself? I know you cannot say what is not true?”

“Oh well! never mind,” said Charlotte, hurriedly, and seeming really alarmed. “Never mind asking any one. You shall hear me some time—only not now. I never play,” she added, quickly, “before my cousin, or—, it is so difficult—so foolish for that—” she seemed confused—got up,—and, as if vexed and annoyed at herself, walked away to another part of the room, took up a book, and, seating herself on a sofa, began to read very intently, whilst concealing her face with the book. Edward Temple smiled. “Pretty piece of acting! She will *not* play.”

“How delightful it is,” said he, turning to a clever, entertaining Mrs. Fuller, who was of the party at Weston; “How delightful it

is to have something left to the imagination! How convenient too, to have an imagination to leave anything to!"

"And this is apropos of *what*?" said Mrs. Fuller.

"That I leave to *your* imagination, Mrs. Fuller," said he. "Do not believe, or *imagine* (I should say), that I invoked imagination for nothing."

That next morning, Mr. Temple persuaded Charlotte Daventry to sit down to the piano-forte. No one but Mrs. Cunningham was in the room, and Mrs. Cunningham did not know one tune from another.

Charlotte Daventry touched the instrument. Could any one doubt her powers of performance? Edward Temple started. She went on! How spirited! How graceful! How expressive! Could it be?—She stopped and blushed, as she saw the effect produced by her performance.

"One more," said Edward Temple, beseechingly. "Pray do not stop!"

She hesitated a moment, and then once more her hands were on the instrument. She began softly, but her enthusiasm led her on. Her soul was in the music. She played the air of a song. It was a beautiful air—a plaintive, touching air.

"Oh! will you not sing it?" said he; and Charlotte forgot her alarm, and sung. There was an impassioned richness in her voice—in her manner of singing—such as enchained, and captivated the senses of the listener. It was a style of singing unlike the generality of that which is heard in private society. It was a style which perhaps we should be unwilling to hear, beautiful though it was, from a sister, a daughter, or a wife.

Edward Temple was surprised, and captivated with it, spite of himself. He listened in breathless fascination, as she continued, and it was not till the voice was silent and the music ceased—not till the rich expressive burst of melody had died away, that he could think who it was that was singing, and what was the tale that singing told—not till she ceased could he say to himself, "Is it possible? Is Anne Grey deceitful?"

Charlotte Daventry stopped; she saw his eyes fixed on her with inquisitive eagerness;—saw that Mrs. Cunningham had left the room: all her former alarm returned. She closed the instrument

hastily—said, “How foolish—how childish!” and, as Mr. Temple began to express his lively admiration of her performance—his wonder she had not performed before—she stopped him :

“Mr. Temple, I am going to ask a favour. You will think me very strange”—and she blushed, and seemed as if she felt with natural modesty, the awkwardness of what she was about to say ; “You will think me very strange, or weak—or—but I must pay the penalty of my folly”—she blushed more deeply. “I am going to ask a favour. I believe that no gentleman,” she laid some slight stress on the word—“would refuse to grant it, or would endeavour to pry into my reason for asking it. I have confidence in your generosity, Mr. Temple,” she continued, seriously. “I am ashamed to have obliged myself to put it to the test—to make myself appear in so ridiculous a light. The favour I have to ask is that you will not mention to any one having heard me play. It is a trifle to ask,” she said, smiling, “and probably you will wonder, or laugh at the seriousness of my manner. But it cannot be helped!—Will you grant my request?”

“Yes, certainly,” said he. “I do not understand it, but you need not be afraid on that account, that I shall treat it lightly.”

“Thank you! thank you!” said Charlotte Daventry, looking at him with modest gratitude.

Edward Temple was surprised, and as she quietly walked out of the room, he felt more completely puzzled than he had allowed himself to be for some time. “I would give a good deal, she had played like a miss at a boarding school,” said he, to himself.

“Not proposed yet!” said Charlotte, to Anne, as they sat together before dressing-time in Anne’s room. “Not proposed yet! But, dear Anne, why does he not? He is certainly enough in love!”

“Nay, Charlotte, do not say that. I am not in the least surprised at his not proposing. I do not suppose he has any idea of doing so. No more idea of proposing to me than to you.”

“Ah! but when he talked to me so much about you,” said Charlotte, not noticing Anne’s confused manner as she uttered the last words ; “and when he is so constantly showing his preference for you, I see a very good reason for being surprised that he has not yet proposed.”

“To tell you the truth, Charlotte” observed Anne, “I am afraid

to think about it. I have at last discovered my own weakness, and I fear I may have cause to regret that I ever gave way to it. I do not deny that Mr. Temple has certainly shown me great attention—his manner has at times—but still,” said she, after a slight pause, “he may not mean anything. He is a man of the world. I am so unused to the manners of the world, that I may be deceived by a manner which would be looked on as meaning nothing to those who are accustomed to it.”

“Nay, Anne, excuse me for laughing at such a serious, pretty, modest speech,” said Charlotte, gaily; “but I must hope that Mr. Temple does not accustom many of the young ladies of his acquaintance to such a manner and such attentions, as those he bestows on you. No, no! I am no judge of the manners of the world, but even I can judge so far as this—that no man *of* the world, or *not* of the world, can pay such attentions to any woman, as Mr. Temple does to you, without meaning something, or its being evident he *ought* to mean something by them.”

“You are a good comforter and flatterer,” said Anne. “But there is Watson come to put a stop to the chance of my being laughed at or flattered any more;” and Anne turned with a sigh to the contemplation of the gown in Watson’s hand, and the duties of the toilette, and her sigh might be supposed to arise from a reflection on the vanities of life. No one could tell whether she sighed because she saw an image of vanity in a pretty gown, and a smart lady’s-maid, or because she did not see very clearly whether the attentions of a man of the world meant the same thing as those of other men.

Mr. Temple’s visit at Weston was at length at an end, and if Anne ever asked herself that question, she could never satisfactorily reply to it. Mr. Temple left Weston; and, if he had not been a man of the world, Anne would have said he left it with a heart not untouched: he left Weston with evident regret; and even Anne Grey, diffident as she was, would have been forced to believe, had he not been a man of the world, that that regret was caused by bidding her adieu.

She found the first days after his departure hang very heavy. She had to scold herself, to be really very angry with herself, to form many very good resolutions, more excellent each time they were

broken. She firmly resolved never to think of Mr. Temple; steadily determined not to let him engross too much of her thoughts; but Anne felt guilty of being in love! She owned to herself that she liked Mr. Temple,—that the fact of his liking her or not was no longer one of indifference to her. She certainly might, with very little vanity, believe that he liked her. He had shown every symptom of it. He had said everything to make her suppose so. The only reason for doubting it was the very simple and self-evident fact of his being Edward Temple! It seems strange that this, of which no one could be ignorant, should be a reason for doubting—yet so it was! ‘Edward Temple,’ stood in Anne’s mind for something so superior to all others that her diffidence took alarm when she thought that it was he whom she believed capable of entertaining a preference for her. His manner to her, said, ‘I love you, Anne Grey;’ but his name, his reputation in the world,—in Anne’s own estimation,—his talents,—all that was expressed and understood by those words, ‘Edward Temple,’ said, you must be flattering yourself with false and presumptuous hopes.

It was thus the matter stood in Anne’s heart, and she felt guilty of being in love—positively *guilty*, for Anne Grey was not conceited; so she determined to think of him only as a motive to improvement. Improvement! for the sake of rendering herself worthy to be loved by him! Amiable deceit! Anne Grey, you are a heroine after all! Forget Edward Temple when you are more than perfect. Forget him when you think yourself perfect; and then, Mr. Temple, do not fear that you will ever be forgotten!

CHAPTER XXXV.

LET any one, who can, decide whether it is more a proof of being amiable to love or to be loved? We all have said of many of our acquaintance, they must be amiable for they are so much loved; and we all have said of many others, they must be amiable

for they love so warmly. In both there seems a proof of merit, but who shall decide which is the greater? Still more, who can decide which is most agreeable?

Perhaps they are closely united; for to be loved and not to love! where is the charm of that? and to love and not to be loved!—Oh! who may not guess or know that misery? To love, with the fond clinging love of a child, and to meet a parent's cold and careless eye! To love with the warmth and sympathy of a sister, and to meet no tenderness, no confidence in return! To love with a parent's watchful, anxious, undying love, and to meet ingratitude, carelessness, contempt! To love with a woman's fond, devoted, trembling, constant love, and to read in the look and tone of him beloved, that worse than serpent's sting—indifference! To love and to be loved are indeed intimately blended; the pleasure of one consists in the pleasure of the other; but not so the merit. The merit of the one consists perhaps in the absence of the other. It is easy to love when we are loved; but where there is coldness and indifference to meet our affection—*then* to love is indeed a merit.

Anne's affection for Charlotte had very much increased of late. She had always pitied and wished to love her; but now she had no longer occasion to think of doing so as a duty. She really regarded her with sincere affection. She saw with pleasure the gradual improvement in her mind and manners. She was no longer the awkward, ignorant, wondering girl, whose warm affections and lively intellectual powers had lain half dormant for want of culture. She had learnt to think as well as to feel. She had learnt, or rather she was beginning to learn, to sometimes deliberate before she acted or spoke. She could not always quite control her lively imagination, her warm impetuous feelings; but still there was *some* control; before, there had been none.

Anne saw how much she must have been neglected from the rapid improvement she made. She was astonished at the powers of her mind as they were gradually developed, and still more charmed with the simplicity, the modesty, the *naïveté*, and ingenuousness of feeling, manner, and sentiment allied to such powers. Charlotte Daventry was the most teachable person that ever existed. She was both eager and able to learn. She felt her own igno-

rance, and she seemed grateful to any who would give her instruction. She was only too desponding and diffident of her own abilities. She looked up to her cousins as immeasurably superior to herself, and if Anne had been vain, she might easily have been flattered by Charlotte Daventry's admiration of her talents and attainments. As it was, she only thought that Charlotte's warm affection made her considerably overrate her merits, and whilst her vanity was unflattered, her heart was touched, and she loved Charlotte the better, for the warmth of attachment which her flattering view of her character displayed.

She was indeed an object of the most heart-felt interest to Anne ; and her pity, her interest and affection were daily increased as she saw what Charlotte might have been, but for the mismanagement and neglect of a fond, but selfish and unamiable father. Since Sophy's marriage she had become more intimate with her real character than before, when Charlotte, with characteristic amiability, had hesitated to advance her claims on the regard and affection of either. Whilst the two sisters remained together, they were all-sufficient to each other. With the sensitive intelligence of a generous mind, she probably feared to impair that intimate communion of thought and feeling which existed between them, and which the interference of a third person could not fail to interrupt.

Anne saw that Charlotte was still reserved and diffident about herself, and that, excepting to those she really loved, and whom she felt really loved her, she had the same light, careless manner as heretofore. But to Anne she revealed her feelings ; and, perhaps, without being aware that she had any stores of mind to unfold, she did gradually unfold them to Anne. Yet there was something that Anne could scarcely understand in her character. She was still wild and foolish at times, displaying strange bursts of emotion, and then almost heartless levity. She was always right and sensible when she had time to consider ; but it seemed that, from the long want of control, her impulses were often too strong for her reason : her mind, too uncultivated, at times run riot, and she indulged in folly, for which her more sober judgment must afterwards have reproved her. She was at one time like a child—at another like a woman of sense and judgment.

Anne watched her with almost painful interest : her character

seemed like a difficult enigma. Sometimes she believed that she had read it; that she thoroughly understood it: and then some trifling circumstance occurred, and she was thrown completely wrong once more. The enigma was more dark than ever.

Anne felt that Charlotte confided every thought and feeling to her, and she gave her, in return, sincere confiding affection. No wonder Charlotte Daventry improved! none but Anne Grey could be ignorant why she should be likely to do so. None but her could think so lightly of that sense and judgment which were given for her use; given as the writer of valuable books gives his wisdom and his knowledge to the world: a free gift, to be used by all, and profited by—neither forced, nor bestowed against the will; but freely and unreservedly; to be looked to and consulted when inclination prompts, or necessity calls for their assistance; laying none under a sense of obligation; but writing, as he could not but write, what was wisdom and knowledge. It was thus with the sense, the judgment, and good principles of Anne Grey. They lay in the book of her heart and mind; and those who chose to read that book might read instruction there.

And did Charlotte Daventry read that book? Did she turn the pages, and with anxious care, search for profit, and instruction, and riches to be found in them? Yes, she did look into that book! She searched with eager, watchful scrutiny. She read each page—pondered—read and read again. She knew that unpretending open book; each line, and word and letter; it was simple—easy to be read. Was it so easy to profit by it? to apply the lessons inculcated there? or was it more easy to turn those lessons to evil? to turn them to their own and others' destruction? The improvement in Charlotte Daventry, which Anne watched with delight and interest, would have seemed to prove that she at least had read them aright, and that she had profited by her intimate knowledge of the heart and feelings and sentiments of Anne Grey.

Soon after the period of Mr. Temple's first visit to Weston, William Grey, who had been absent for about a fortnight, returned home.

William Grey was not apt to make confidences. He was not perhaps reserved in disposition. He did not keep facts and feelings to himself, because he thought it good policy to do so, but he seldom

mentioned anything about his own feelings or affairs, because it was a trouble to do so, and he did not consider any one much worth taking the trouble for.

According to this sensible view of the use and advantages of unreserve, William Grey had never told any of his family that he had been in love with Jane Graham, and that he had been vexed at hearing from Lady Downton that she was going to be married. This however was really the case, but what could he have gained had he mentioned it? Only the bore of hearing them say “how sorry,” or “how glad” they were. They would not have prevented Jane Graham from falling in love with any other person, or have made her fall in love with him: so he said nothing about it, and this wise reserve obliges us to recapitulate for him all that otherwise might have been learned in the more agreeable mode of conversation.

The fact was, he had met Miss Jane Graham in Cheshire about two years before, during a visit to some of his friends in that county. He admired her, and I suppose I may say she admired him—that is, by mutual consent they sat together, talked together, walked together, rode together, and made love together: in short it was a flirtation. When William Grey was safely out of the house, he said to himself, “What a pretty girl Jane Graham is!” and when Jane Graham began to flirt with the next admirer that fell in her way, she said, “He is not so agreeable as Mr. William Grey.”

William Grey just thought enough of Jane Graham to make him consider Cheshire a very pleasant county, and he resolved to visit it again the next year, having seen her in town during the Spring. Jane Graham was still unmarried—still pretty—still agreeable, and still ready to flirt with William Grey; and at last, by dint of remaining several days in the same house together, by dint of riding together in the morning, and sitting together in the evening; by dint of William’s listening to Jane’s singing, and Jane’s listening to the hints of her female friends that “Mr. Grey was certainly a great admirer of hers;” it so happened that William Grey and Jane Graham did fall in love with one another. She was a pretty, lively, and accomplished girl, one of the acknowledged belles of the county, good-tempered, well-disposed, and, in the language of some of her admirers, had “plenty of spirit and no nonsense about her!” would

have no idea of not taking her own part, yet not in the least masculine, and, though she believed that no girl could possibly be so foolish as to fall in love with any man who was not twice as much in love with her, still she thought it very possible to be in love, supposing the person for whom she was to entertain 'la belle passion' was sufficiently enamoured and agreeable, had a good fortune, and was approved of by all the county, as well as her father and mother.

William Grey left Cheshire all but the acknowledged lover of Jane Graham, and with a tolerably positive assurance on her part that whatever love he chose to bestow was reciprocated in the proper degree by her.

The next thing William heard of her was from Lady Downton—that she was going to be married. His indignation at such a report for some time kept him *very sensibly* from making any effort to ascertain its truth. The papers were silent on the subject, and at last he felt a curiosity to visit Cheshire once more. He went; the story of Jane Graham was untrue—he proposed—was accepted—meant to write and tell his father every day, but every day delayed doing so—fortunately, as it happened, for it would have been a great deal of trouble for nothing.

For some days after his proposal, William thought himself very happy. But William was accustomed to consider self as the first object, and he could not exactly understand why a woman who was in love with him should expect to be more considered and attended to than him. He was careless—she was angry—a quarrel ensued. It was made up once, and William, who really loved her, thought he had been to blame, and tried to be more attentive and think less of self.

But though Jane loved William, as she was a girl of spirit, she felt persuaded from his former carelessness that she ought to keep him in order, and make him properly attentive to her; consequently she became very *exigeante* and very tiresome—was ready to quarrel at the smallest appearance of negligence or indifference, though she might have known, by this time, that it was in appearance only. She tried William too much; he could not completely overcome his usual character; he thought she could not really love him, or she would not be so punctilious about trifles—he was hurt and offended: she thought it right to show her dignity and be offended too. A

more serious quarrel than the last ensued. To assert her independence she began to flirt with an old admirer. William's indignation knew no bounds. His feelings were wounded. He declared that she could never have loved him, to be thus guilty of flirting with another person. All his good and bad feelings were roused. He really loved her, and she really loved him, but neither could give way—neither could confess that they were in the wrong; and they parted, proudly intimating to one another that the engagement must be considered at an end, and William Grey returned home, for the first time in his life, fairly out of spirits.

Anne quickly perceived it, and Charlotte Daventry, kind-hearted girl! no less quickly.

“Poor William is sadly out of spirits,” said she, to Anne. “He is so cross, which is a sure sign.”

“He is certainly out of spirits,” said Anne.

“He is more sarcastic than usual in his invective against our sex,” rejoined Charlotte. “He never thought us such a set of simpletons before,” continued she.

“I do not think William is a likely person to be in love,” said Anne, doubtfully.

“*Nous verrons!*” thought Charlotte Daventry, and she said, “Oh, no!” Anne was silent, and Charlotte Daventry formed a resolution and adhered to it.

In a few days William Grey intrusted his griefs to her. Charlotte's kind, considerate manner, and unobtrusive attention, won confidence even from him. Charlotte saved him the trouble of any effort to tell what he felt. It all came naturally. He really could not help telling her. In short, he never before had had the same occasion to make a confidante: he never had suffered so much before. William Grey had a warm heart—he had strong affections, and if self had not interfered, he would have been a particularly amiable person: had it not been for self, he would have been the kindest, warmest, most affectionate friend—the most constant and devoted lover. For a time, he suffered a great deal from Jane Graham's conduct towards him, but he found so much comfort in talking to Charlotte Daventry about the affair, that he almost began to forget why he wanted comforting. At length the papers reminded him.

One morning Mrs. Grey having duly looked at the newspaper, began by way of amusement to herself and others, a doubtful one, perhaps, to read a part of it aloud. "The lady of the Rev. James Richards of a son." "At the Rectory, Westwood, the lady of the Rev. Timothy Hopkins, of twins, a son and a daughter."

"Bless me! how people do go on!" interlarded Mrs. Grey.

"The lady of Josiah Parkins, of a daughter still-born." "By the Rev. Joseph Wood, Mark Anthony, eldest son of Mark Anthony Peter Giles, Esq., of Braywood, Co. Kent, to Sarah Amelia Jane, eldest daughter of John Jones, Esq., of Rose-bower Cottage, near Bristol."

"Oh, yes! marriages, I see," observed Mrs. Grey again. "On Wednesday last, at St. George's, Hanover Square, Frederic John Goldby, Esq., eldest son of Sir Frederic John Goldby, Bart., to Jane Caroline, second daughter of Arthur Graham, Esq." William suddenly got up and left the room.

"Is anything the matter with William?" said Mr. Grey.

"I don't know," said Mrs. Grey.

"Oh dear! no," said Charlotte, "I dare say not. I know he was going to look at a dog that was coming for him this morning, and I dare say, he only just remembered it." Mr. Grey resumed his book. Anne was not in the room. Mrs. Grey finished the list of marriages, and hurried through the deaths. These she read to herself, except when she came to that of a very old friend, and then, in an animated voice, as if cheered and excited by the intelligence, she read it aloud for the benefit of Mr. Grey.

"Ah! only think! I have known him as long as I have known anything; but I have not seen him these twenty years. Well, my dear, perhaps you will like to look at the paper," laying it near Mr. Grey. "That's a very amusing paper, Mr. Grey—always full of news:" and Mrs. Grey settled herself, more comfortably than usual, to her work.

Charlotte shortly after left the room. She found William in his study. He was pacing backwards and forwards. He stopped as she entered—he expected to see her.

"Did you hear it?" said he, "Oh! I am a miserable fellow! It was too bad—too cold—too heartless!—so soon!" and William leaned against the mantel-piece and shaded his face to conceal his

emotion. "Well, it is all over now!" said he, rousing himself, after some minutes' silence. "It can't be helped, and I have had a good escape :—but Jane Graham! Can it be—so heartless—so deceitful!—I did not think it! Aye, you pity me, Charlotte," said he, looking at her whilst the tear glistened in his eye. "You are very kind to me, Charlotte. I knew you would feel for me;" and Charlotte showed by her kind, compassionate voice and manner, that she did so.

"I was obliged to run away, to prevent their seeing my distress," continued William, "when my mother read out that odious paragraph, spelling it word by word; and I knew the next thing would be, 'You know Miss Graham, do not you, William?' so I got away before it came to that! But they did not perceive, I hope—they did not remark anything?" looking at Charlotte.

"Oh! my uncle said something, but I soon turned it off—I said, I thought you were gone to look at a dog, and he was satisfied."

"Aye, thank you—you are a good soul, Charlotte: you never tattle. I would not have all the world knowing this—and all of them coming and plaguing one to death with their pity, or their ill-natured remarks. No, not even one of my own family. It is ten to one if they did not run daggers through one every day by their blundering compassion. From Anne, to be sure, there is little danger of that: she is the least of a blunderer I ever saw. But one is enough—you know all—I would have told her, as I have told you, but she never asked me, and it is all as well! You know how to do one good, but I never should have told you if you had not half found it out yourself, and saved me the trouble. You are a good girl, Charlotte—and God knows!" said he, remembering himself and Jane Graham '*that was*' again; "God knows, I want comfort now!" And Charlotte administered the comfort so well, that in a short time he was again in danger of forgetting why he wanted comforting.

In short, William was not a sort of man to fret very long over the loss of a mistress whom he had loved ever so much. Had it interfered with his every-day comfort—had her being married to another involved the loss of his breakfast, dinner, or supper—the loss of his arm-chair, or the absence of the book he wanted to read; had it made any one about him disobliging, or too silent, or too talk-

ative, or too grave, or too gay—then William would never have recovered his disappointment—he would have worn the willow to this day, and might have gone into an atrophy, or a decline, or a nervous fever on the strength of it; but as Jane Graham's marriage did not materially interfere with the continuance of all his personal comforts, his health was unimpaired. Had the affliction under which he suffered been a scolding, disagreeable wife, instead of the loss of a wife, he would never have got over it. That would have spoken forcibly to his feelings every day of his life. It would have been *bore interminable*, and William hated to be bored; but the loss of the affections of a girl with whom he was in love was a very different thing, and he soon forgot to care much whether Jane Graham were married or single.

However he did not so easily forget Charlotte Daventry's kindness. She had begun by comforting him when he was unhappy. He now found that she was just as essential to his comfort when he was happy.

He liked her, and not unfrequently said to Anne, "What a nice girl Charlotte was!" and "how amazingly she was improved!" He often asked Anne whether she did not think Charlotte looked exceedingly handsome. He sometimes asked her whether she had ever made a simpleton of herself and been in love. He often said to Anne, "You don't do that half so well as Charlotte does," when others might have seen but little difference, and that little in Anne's favour.

In short, (is any one prepared for what is to follow?) William Grey, at the end of a few weeks after Jane Graham's marriage, found himself in the pleasant, or unpleasant, condition of falling in love, and with no other than his good cousin Charlotte Daventry. Every one will say, "Nothing more natural! more common-place!" for love, or hate, is a necessary consequence of that blessed tie of cousinhood, where from childhood we have not been brought up together; cutting teeth, holiday visits, and school-boy jokes, may prove unfailing safeguards; but William Grey had none of these, and he chose, or rather he did not choose, for he could not help it, he *chanced* to fix upon love.

He became seriously in love with Charlotte Daventry. Anne saw the rise of the passion. She saw Charlotte totally unconscious of it

—feeling and speaking of William with fond affection, but with a sister's love.

No! Charlotte Daventry was certainly not in love, nor the least aware that William Grey was in love with her. There was no one she was so fond of as William, no one for whom she had such ready smiles, but alas! she had always smiles—she had no frowns—acmé of a lover's wishes—frowns! She had no grave looks, no half averted eyes, no blushes. No! William Grey, unhappy man! could not call a single frown his own, and he was in despair. He was desperately in love: Charlotte Daventry had a power over his heart that no other woman had ever yet attained. Anne saw with sorrow the real state of the case, but was unwilling to reveal to Charlotte, who remained in happy ignorance, the real nature of William's feelings towards her. Anne loved her the better for it: still, it was very vexatious, for Charlotte unconsciously did all she could to increase his passion. *Unconsciously*, for it was merely by her show of fondness, of sisterly affection and attention to William, and the unreserved display of all the graces and charms of her mind and heart.

Oh, it was a sad thing! a provoking thing! It would have given her such real pleasure, such delight, to have William and Charlotte so fond of one another, if there had not been love in the case! but she knew that love could not be a happy one; she thought it unlikely that Charlotte should return his passion, and it would never be approved by her parents. It was very annoying: Anne sighed over it very often, when she saw poor William looking so miserable, and jealous, and so much in love; and Charlotte looking so innocent, and fascinating, and smiling.

What was to be done? Anne did not know. She was very sorry, but, indeed, it could not be helped.

It could not be helped! Comfortable words! The Italian “*dolce far niente*,” expresses but the counterpart of the comfortable quiescence conveyed in those English words, “It can't be helped.” How many idle hearts have been lulled into repose, after a gentle shove from the spirit of activity and trouble, by those soothing words, “It can't be helped!” How many a twinging conscience touched by the troublesome spirit of remorse, as it views the poor victim hurrying on to the destruction that might have been averted, is soothed by that quieting sentence, “It can't be helped!” How many an awk-

ward footman who throws the contents of the soup-plate on the silky coat of the favourite lap-dog, consoles himself with those words, "It can't be helped!" How many a pretty coquette, whose bright eyes have caused a duel and loss of limb to some unfortunate hero, consoles herself with those cheering words, "It can't be helped!" How many—but who does not know how many—who has not said to himself in an indolent, a self-consoling, or a self-upbraiding mood, with a comfortable shrug, a conscience-quieting pull of the chair to the cheering vicinity of the fire—who has not said to himself at such moments, "It can't be helped?"

What sensible man, or woman, will fret about that which cannot be helped? Whether it might have been helped is not the question. It cannot, or we wish to believe it cannot be helped now, and we bless our English ingenuity for devising such a balm to wounded consciences or hearts as those few, simple, inelegant words. So Anne Grey tried to comfort herself, as all the world have comforted themselves before her, by saying, "It can't be helped!"

CHAPTER XXXVI.

ALL the party from Weston were invited to Chatterton, and Anne thought with pleasure of the visit. It is difficult to say what pleasure means. Pleasure bears a different sense to every different person. Pleasure to a country Miss just 'come out,' means 'a race ball, and so many partners that she is danced till she can hardly stand.' Pleasure to an aspirant after fashion means 'a card for Devonshire House, or a nod from Lady——.' Pleasure to a school-boy means 'tying a string to his schoolfellow's toe when he is asleep, and pulling it till he awakes him.' Pleasure to a man of an inquiring mind means 'a toad inside a stone, or a beetle running with its head off.' Pleasure to a man of taste means 'a first rate *artiste*, and a good dinner.' Pleasure to a

labouring man means ‘doing nothing.’ Pleasure to a fine lady means ‘having something to do to drive away the time.’ Pleasure to an antiquarian means ‘an illegible inscription.’ Pleasure to a connoisseur means ‘a dark, invisible, very fine picture.’ Pleasure to a philosopher, a modern philosopher, a young philosopher, means ‘liking nothing, despising everything, and proving every one a simpleton except himself.’ Pleasure to a beggar means ‘a sovereign by mistake, instead of a shilling.’ Pleasure to a sailor, ‘a fresh breeze and a sight of land.’ Pleasure to the afflicted, ‘a tear.’ Pleasure to the sweetest of all tempers, ‘the last word in an argument.’ Pleasure to the social, ‘the human face divine!’ Pleasure to the morose, ‘I shan’t see a soul for the next six months.’ Pleasure to an author, ‘the last page of his manuscript’—bliss inexpressible—‘Finis.’ Pleasure to all, to every one in their own way, and that way a different one.

How then define pleasure ! It is indefinable ! Who can say where it is ? what it is ? A whole college of wise men will not define it. They all may say, ‘I am pleased,’ ‘I have been pleased ;’ but alas ! their pleasure is not the same as others’ pleasure. “Is *that* pleasure !” the ninety and nine say to the one exception, “*That* is not pleasure ;” and the ninety and nine all say what pleasure is ; and the ninety and nine all hold up their hands in astonishment at the pleasure of the other ninety and eight. In the multitude of hearts, and souls, and feelings, in the world, there are not two hearts, and souls, and feelings, which will confess pleasure to be one and the same thing. There may be broad resemblances, but there are shades of difference in all.

What then was Anne Grey’s pleasure ? How dare we speak of it ! write of it ! It is a dangerous word. If it even existed, how momentary ! how passing ! before it is yet well written—before the ink is dry—it is vanished ! Like the lightning’s flash, or the rainbow’s tints, or the April shower, or the infant’s tear, or the meteor in the sky, or the bubble in the stream—it is gone ! What then were the ingredients of pleasure held out to Anne Grey in a visit to Chatterton ? She did not dislike Mrs. Foley, she was anxious to be liked by Miss Foley, and she already liked Mr. George Foley ; and more than all these, she was not sorry to leave home on account of William and Charlotte, as she hoped some little change

might be of advantage to them. These were her prospects of pleasure in a visit to Chatterton. Perhaps they implied rather more negative, than positive enjoyment ; and this alas ! is too often the meaning of the term. It is pleasure to escape from pain.

Anne then looked forward with pleasure to the visit to Chatterton, for she had no great faith in William's constancy, when less boldly defended by circumstances than in the present instance. Circumstances now had befriended it : like the warm and delicate bed of cotton wool, guarding the brittle trinket which safely travels through the jars and tumults of the road, enveloped in its nurturing and concealing folds, circumstances had guarded William Grey's constancy from the chance of injury.

Anne hoped the visit to Chatterton might give the wished for collision. Some very pretty face, she hoped, might there be seen, or some more languishing softness than Charlotte's—but no ! that would not do for William. It must be some pretty, lively, clever person. Anne had her exactly in her mind. Isabella Foley was too quiet, and a little too sentimental. William certainly liked her—he *endured* her, and never left his comfortable chair when she went near. Still Anne feared she would not do, and she anxiously looked round the drawing-room at Chatterton, the first evening, to see if there was any one who might do better.

Yes, exactly ! the very beau-ideal of Anne's imagination was there ! A Miss Ferrars, who was very pretty, lively and sensible. A girl whom every one knew, and William had heard of, but never before seen ; he had once said, 'I should like to know that girl ;' 'I am sure I should like her.' Anne's eyes brightened as she perceived her. She glanced at William as Miss Ferrars' name was mentioned, within his hearing. But no ! William was eagerly watching Charlotte Daventry.

Charlotte was seated at a table ; Frank Crawford, who had returned to Chatterton that morning, was standing by her, half leaning over her chair ; and Charlotte was half smiling ; one moment throwing up her large expressive eyes at him, filled with intelligence and animation, then letting them fall again, as the blush slightly tinged her face. It was radiant animation—it was pretty, touching confusion. William Grey *might* hear Miss Ferrars' name ; he *might* be aware that she was in the room, but Anne saw it was of no impor-

tance to him if he did. She turned away with a sigh. She feared that the visit to Chatterton, from which she hoped so much, would be worse than useless; for there was Charlotte Daventry with a lover, to excite William's jealousy, and thus keep up his passion for her.

Anne wondered, with even a little vexation, what could have made Frank Crawford come to Chatterton so very soon again. To be sure it was tolerably evident why he had. His admiration for Charlotte could scarcely be unobserved. Charlotte herself was partly aware of it. She had mentioned it to Anne—said he was agreeable, but a sort of person no woman would ever think of marrying, should he even be inclined to put her thoughts in that way to the test; she liked talking to him, and she should go on talking to him.

Anne said, "For shame, Charlotte! Don't you know you are encouraging him by that; that you are indulging a little spirit of flirtation?"

"Oh! no indeed!" said Charlotte: "it would seem absurd that I should give up talking to him, if you knew how very little there is in it! It would be giving him encouragement, to change my manner. But I will try not to talk *very* much to him. You shall see, when we go to Chatterton, Anne. But somehow, I do not know how—I always do what is natural. If I am inclined to talk to any one, I never think about it. I cannot feel all those reserves. I know I should be looking awkward, and constrained all day, if I thought about my manner."

"Well then," said Anne, "do not think about it, Charlotte dear. I believe you are right, and never was there a girl with less of the spirit of coquetry than you."

"Very well, then I will not think about Mr. Frank Crawford," said Charlotte. "I will just talk to him if he talks to me, or if I happen to sit near him, or if I happen to think of anything I wished to say to him. I am glad you say it does not signify, because I know I should have felt so awkward when he spoke to me, if I had fancied I ought not to talk to him."

"Yes, that would never have done," said Anne, "so do not 'fash' yourself about Mr. Frank Crawford," added she, laughing. "Let him take his chance, he is pretty well able to take care of himself."

“Yes, indeed!” said Charlotte, joining in her laugh; and she darted out of the room humming the air of a song.

“Happy girl!” thought Anne. “I never saw any one so free from nonsense and affectation. I do not wonder at William’s liking her!”

In vain was Miss Ferrars everything that was agreeable during that visit. William would not see or feel it. He said she was—he believed, he knew that she was ‘a very nice girl’—‘very agreeable’—but it was evident that he knew nothing about it. He was intent on Charlotte Daventry. He was very low—very jealous of Frank Crawford. “He hated the fellow!” and he said so once before Charlotte.

“Hate Mr. Crawford!” said she, with a look of surprise. “My dear William!”

William coloured up. There was a mixture of feelings about the “Hate Frank Crawford,” and the “My dear William;” but the “Hate Frank Crawford,” predominated.

“Nay, you need not tell me *you* do not hate him,” said he, pettishly, and he got up and walked out of the room.

Charlotte Daventry was seated with her back towards Anne, and her eyes followed William. She smiled as the door closed—it was a bright triumphant smile, but she turned to Anne with a vexed, sorrowful look.

“What is the matter with William, Anne?”

“I don’t know,” said Anne. She *did* know, and perhaps she should not have said she did not; but ‘I don’t know’ is easily said, and means nothing.

“Well, nor I,” said Charlotte, “nor why he hates Mr. Crawford.”

“Oh! but I do!” said she, after a pause.

Anne started.

“But I do! Mr. Foley said Frank Crawford had killed more birds on the moors last year than William. He said he was a better shot. I don’t understand these things, but I remember William looked angry at the time, and that’s it! so it is!” and Charlotte, with a satisfied, merry air, ran off to look for a book of drawings that Mrs. Foley wanted to see, leaving Anne to be annoyed and to think by herself.

“ Jealous of Frank Crawford’s address! of Frank Crawford’s success! Yes, indeed,” said Charlotte Daventry to herself, with a bright smile, as she found the book she wanted. “ Jealous of his success in something more important than the death of a bird! Not less light and airy, and difficult to attain—not less ready to fly away than the poor little downy bird, is the possession of which he is jealous. No! light, deluding, fluttering thing! ’Tis this you are jealous of! The pretty phantom—the pretty nothing, a woman’s love! It may be yours—theirs—any one’s. It is *worth* having.”

Charlotte Daventry walked off with her book, with a light and bounding step: she went to look for Mrs. Foley in her morning sitting-room.

“ All gone but you, Mr. Crawford! ” said she, as she entered the room, and saw no one but Frank Crawford sitting there. “ All gone but you! ” as she shut the door, and seated herself on the low chair by the fire-side.

“ Yes, and if you had known it, I suppose I should not have been honoured by your company, ” said Frank Crawford, in a slight tone of pique, getting up, and placing himself near her.

“ That is a very pretty, indignant tone, Mr. Crawford. It is a pity you do not reserve it for Miss Ferrars, or your cousin, ” said she, with an arch smile.

“ I wish to heaven! ”—began Frank Crawford with vehemence.

“ Do not wish anything to heaven, Mr. Crawford, in so loud a voice, ” said Charlotte, interrupting him. “ Moreover, do not wish anything to heaven, till you know what you have to wish for. ”

She paused—her eyes were turned half-reproachfully, half sadly, towards him for an instant, then cast on the ground. Frank Crawford started up, and came and leant over the back of her chair.

Charlotte looked at him,—one short look; then averting her face to conceal the blush which was stealing over it, she half covered it with one hand, and extended the other towards him.

Crawford seized the hand, and she allowed it to be retained for a few minutes; but then, as he fondly urged its detention, she, with more firmness, drew it away, and said, in a gentle voice, “ This is folly, Mr. Crawford—but I will excuse it. I have but too much need! ” and her eyes were once more averted; she sighed, and

added, in a scarce audible voice: “but too much need, where the folly is mutual.”

Low as that voice was, Frank Crawford heard its gentlest tones. He listened with rapture.

“You say it is mutual,” said he, eagerly. “Now, have I anything to fear—anything to wish, but for *one* thing?” and he intently gazed on her face. “Let me hope that I may claim this hand,” and he once more seized her hand; “let me hope I may claim it as my own. You have said, once at least, that the love was mutual.”

Charlotte Daventry looked proudly towards him for a moment, and snatched away her hand.

“Do not torture me thus, Miss Daventry! Is there to be no end to this suspense? Will you never let me hope? Let me but look forward to the day when I may call you mine! Dispose of me as you will; but say that you will acknowledge me as your lover!”—

“Mr. Crawford,” said Charlotte, interrupting him, “you will make me afraid of ever being kind to you in future. You forget to whom you are speaking. Do you think that Charlotte Daventry is a woman to acknowledge any man for her lover? To be bound to any man, for a day—or for life!” She looked coldly towards him.

“No, no! I will not be bound; not even by the silken tie of *public* engagement—not even by the more airy bond of *private* engagement. I will not be bound to any man; and if I were, do you think it would be on so short a trial? Do you think, because, for these few short months, you have seemed, what it is so easy for any one to *seem*—that your reward is so soon to be gained? I will not bid you despair, Mr. Crawford——” she turned her eyes for a moment with all their touching tenderness towards him.—

“No! time, perseverance—I will own that I may be won in time; but do not think that it may be the easy work of a day. That a few sighs, a few tender words, can so easily work the effect they do on most women. No, Mr. Crawford, you have deceived yourself. I am not one of the herd of credulous, simple girls to whom you have been accustomed. An easy dupe to fond words, and sighs, and lovers’ follies. I am not so easily won. I love my liberty. I am young. Yes, Mr. Crawford, I am young—some think I have attractions, though heaven knows what they are; and

I am not going to throw away such advantages, real or imaginary, before the teens are well passed, in making the good, neglected, patient wife :—No! time and perseverance *may* work wonders. Yes, even on Charlotte Daventry, where"—she paused for a moment, "where there is already," she turned with soft expressive eyes once more towards him, "where there is already much," she paused again—"to encourage hope, I would say. But—" and the low deep tenderness of her voice was changed—she resumed her lively tone, her lively look :—"Good-bye, Mr. Crawford," said she, and quickly rising, walked out of the room.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

DOES love—does constancy exist amongst men? Any young lady may ask that question, and every young lady may answer it in her own way—we will not promise that it will be the right one. If she has beauty, she will answer, "Certainly! How could any one doubt it?" If she has no beauty, she will say, "I have heard it does. I have read of it; but I do not believe it." Mamas and Papas say it is all nonsense; there is no such thing. They are older and wiser—they ought to know; moreover they have had experience.

Be that as it may, George Foley's love for Anne Grey certainly increased each time he saw her. Perhaps he was singular in not growing tired of a pretty face by seeing it often. He certainly was very singular for loving one and the same for more than a month together: more especially when that one neither frowned, quarrelled, nor coquetted with him, to keep alive his interest; seemed to like him just as well one minute as another; and, wonderful to say! never changed from a smile to a frown in the space of a whole second; but was always ready to talk, and to accost him with a cheerful air of welcome when they met. She never amused him with varieties of manner, and still George Foley continued to love

the sight of Anne Grey, and her quiet happy smile, better than any other sight in the world.

Strange anomaly ! Were I not writing of common-place, good kind of people, every one would say, "How unnatural !" But so it was, and he felt more and more convinced that all accusations against her were totally unfounded. Every conversation he held with her displayed some new proof of amiable feeling, justness of thought and opinion, integrity and candour, united to the most engaging refinement of mind.

We are all, more or less, the dupes of appearances. None more so than those who profess never to be so duped. Those who, once deceived, resolve with surly disgust never again to be taken in, and wisely determine to believe the very contrary of what they behold, are no less egregiously duped than are we ; but it is by themselves. It is true they gain one advantage : they behold beauties of mind and heart in those in whom no one ever beheld beauties before, and who, truth to say, never possessed any. All their flints are diamonds—but then, all their diamonds are flints ; they are dupes—so perhaps are we ; but *we* sometimes stumble on the truth—*they* never do.

Appearances might have duped George Foley ; but he trusted to them, and, as it chanced, he was not deceived. He looked at Anne, and he believed that she was faultless. If a sensible man is led away by his feelings, we are always glad when we find that they happened to lead him right ; that, though he blundered forward with a blind guide, chance befriended him ; and he and his blind guide did not stumble over any stones in the way.

George Foley intrusted his opinions to Isabella, and Isabella, who could not help being captivated by the sweetness of Anne's manner, and whose feelings in all instances were apt to run away with her judgment, was now inclined to agree with him, and to readily allow there must be some mistake. Anne and Charlotte must both be in the right. Both must be amiable. She could not allow either to be in the wrong ; and when her brother saw the affectionate manner of Charlotte Daventry to Anne, and heard Anne's warm praises of her, he forgot much of what he had thought before, especially as there was no repetition of the cause. He was too busily engaged in loving Anne Grey to have much time to bestow in a scrutiny of

another's character, and he was unwilling to believe any ill of so near a relation of the person he loved. So he tacitly chimed in with Isabella's view of the case. There must have been some mistake; both were certainly amiable—both were delightful, and charming, and almost perfect. The '*almost*' in his mind belonged to Charlotte Daventry. The '*perfect*' stood alone for Anne Grey.

Anne, meantime, gave a tacit encouragement to his love, by her unconsciousness of its existence. She liked him—thought very highly of him—found him agreeable and sensible: she felt a great regard and esteem for him: was perfectly at ease with him—considered him in the light of a sincere friend, and one to whom she loved to talk better than to most other people. There was in all this much that approached to love—and, if her affections had not been pre-engaged, who knows how it might have been?

George Foley, encouraged by the frank cordiality of her manner, by the pleasure so unreservedly displayed in conversing with him, began to hope that his affection was returned. He was not aware of Mr. Temple's visit to Weston. He had heard and seen nothing of him lately; and he forgot his fears about him—forgot his prudence—his promised self-control;—what man in love ever remembered anything he ought to have done?—and in a short time from Anne's visit to Chatterton, he proposed. As might be expected, he was rejected—firmly and decidedly, but with much to soften the disappointment of such a refusal, in the manner by which it was conveyed, in the expressions of friendship and interest, which were mingled with Anne's firm rejection of his addresses.

George Foley was ready enough, now it was too late, to see and bewail his own folly and rashness, and to wonder at his presumptuous hope. He saw that Anne had never thought of him as a lover, and he could scarcely credit his own blindness in fancying that she had—in mistaking mere friendly liking for a warmer passion—in forgetting his pre-conceived opinion, with regard to her preference for Edward Temple. He would not ask Anne for a reason for her refusal—a reason which could be of no other use than to sooth his wounded vanity. He did not ask her, as many inquisitive lovers would have done, whether her affections were pre-engaged? for he felt he had no right to do so. Yet he would have given much to know whether her pre-

ference for Edward Temple was the real cause of her indifference towards himself.

Anne promised him her friendship, and she did it, not as the mere matter of course promise which young ladies think fit to make by way of bon-bon, to sugar over the mortification of a rejection, but with undoubted sincerity and truth. Anne could not dissemble; but fortunately, in her heart, and feeling, and mind, there existed such goodness, and candour, and benevolence that none could feel the want of dissembling. Who would not have preferred truths from Anne Grey to flattering falsehoods from others? There was a charm in Anne's manner, which, even if it could have existed uninfluenced by feeling, would have been delightful in itself; but, flowing as it did from warmth and sensibility of heart, what could equal its fascination? George Foley felt its influence, and he quitted Weston less unhappy than he had believed it possible he could have been under the disappointment of all his fondest hopes, and his admiration for Anne Grey still increased by the calm and dignified, yet modest gentleness of her manner towards him.

And his love!—where was that? Alas, love was not so easily turned into friendship! George Foley had good sense, and he did not fancy that it could. He never hoped that a few words, and a few assurances that love was out of the question, and that friendship was the preferable sentiment of the two, could immediately change its nature. He felt that his love for Anne Grey would remain unchanged, and he would not wish it otherwise till all hope was extinguished by her marriage to another. Then, duty, principle, everything would teach him to exchange it for friendship; but now, George Foley, with the perversity of a sensible, serious, steady-minded man in love, would not relinquish his passion—would not relinquish hoping almost against hope; and he fondly hoped that Time—Time the destroyer, the preserver, the friend, the enemy, would befriend him—that Time would bring him, in the affection of Anne Grey, his dearest reward. And with this hope George Foley left England, and sought, amongst the ruins of Rome, lessons on the transforming powers of Time.

When Anne Grey told her mother that she had refused Mr. George Foley, nothing could exceed Mrs. Grey's astonishment, indignation, and dismay. Anne had never seen her so really angry before. She

asked what she could be thinking of, in thus throwing away her happiness? she told her that she never would be happy, and nearly said she *hoped* she never would. She could scarcely believe that Anne was not in jest; and was half inclined to send a servant after Mr. George Foley, to tell him it was all a mistake.

Anne was very sorry—but what could be done? She could not say that she repented.

Mrs. Grey told Mr. Grey, and Anne had to listen to his questions as to her reason for refusing Mr. George Foley, and to answer, as she felt, with very little appearance of wisdom. She could not say that she did not like him. She thought him superior to almost any other person she knew—very agreeable—peculiarly amiable; and this, poor Anne with a sinking heart, and a feeling of conscious folly, candidly confessed in answer to her father's questions. She began to think, as he looked more and more grave, and put questions to her which candour and justice obliged her to answer so much in favour of the man she had rejected, that she must have behaved very foolishly; and yet something at her heart told her it was impossible she could have done otherwise. She stood before her father self-convicted of nothing more sensible to urge in her defence than that unanswerable rhyme used against the unhappy Dr. Fell:

“ I do not like you, Dr. Fell.
The reason why I cannot tell.
But this I'm sure I know full well,
I do not like you, Dr. Fell.”

Mr. Grey was displeased with Anne: he told her that he had expected to meet with better sense from her; and that she had disappointed him, for he thought very highly of George Foley, and had looked with pleasure to their probable union. Perhaps, Mr. Grey was a little unreasonable, but he was not often so, and in this instance many will acquit him, as he left poor Anne to cry and to feel unhappy; to feel guilty of *something*; she was sure she must be guilty, or her dear, kind, indulgent father would never have been angry with her: yet she could not discover of what she was guilty, and her earnest hope was that Mr. George Foley might be so thoroughly disgusted with her conduct that he would never again wish

to ascertain the state of her feelings towards him. She felt very miserable as she saw her mother's reproachful looks, heard the sharp, angry tone of her voice, and felt the absence of her father's kind, approving smile. He soon however seemed to relent as he saw how patiently and meekly she bore her mother's sharp reproofs, and he kissed her with a greater degree of affection as she wished him good-night; and the next morning, as he saw the traces of tears on her face, he patted her cheek with his usual affection, and said—(blessed words to Anne!) “Well, never mind, Anne! It cannot be helped now—so do not fret any more about it:” and Anne was obliged to leave the room to conceal the tears which delight had called forth at such a return of kindness.

After the first unhappy day was over, she heard but little more on the subject from Mr. Grey, and she hoped that he had nearly forgotten his displeasure; but when the intelligence reached Weston that Mr. George Foley had quitted Chatterton, and was gone abroad, Anne had to endure one more reproving look from him, and a renewal of more open and violent upbraidings from her mother.

One trouble often chases away another! So it happened at this time. Robert Dodson, who, since his ill-fated proposal to Anne, had been absent from home, returned into the neighbourhood, and returned, as it seemed, with revived hopes. His was the very evergreen of love, and he became very assiduous in his visits to Weston.

Mrs. Grey was a cheerful-minded woman. She never fretted long about what could not be helped; if (which was not always easy), that conviction would ever force itself upon her mind! Mr. Robert Dodson's renewed attentions, in the present instance, helped to convince her; and she began again to feel in good humour with Anne: she delicately hinted to her that the best way of repairing an error in one instance was by behaving well in another; in short, that Robert Dodson would do almost as well as George Foley. Anne understood the hints; understood them too well for her comfort—saw Mr. Robert Dodson's almost daily entrance into the sitting-room at Weston, and felt all her vexation return, as she saw that her father and mother smiled in kind welcome on his appearance, and asked him each time on his departure to come again. Robert Dodson did come again, and Anne tried to be kind, and to

behave as usual to him, and yet every time she had succeeded, she feared that she had perhaps succeeded only to do the very thing which would ensure her own unhappiness.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

THERE are moments when we feel the want of a comforter—of some one to whom we can confide our feelings, our sorrows, our hopes. Yes, our *hopes*! for hope will intrude even in the midst of sorrow. It is scarcely in human nature to despair. We cling to life even when misery is darkly spread around; when it hangs like a gloomy cloud over the past, the present, and the future. Yet we cling to life, for one ray of sun-shine pierces through the cloud: that ray is hope! and when hope thus whispers, we seek for a comforter to turn those scarcely audible whispers into the louder, clearer voice of certainty.

A flattering comforter! Oh, dangerous, delusive, and therefore, earthly bliss! But who has not gladly submitted to be deceived, where the deception is of so delightful a nature? We all love to be comforted, whether it be by cold realities, or by warmer and more enchanting fictions. All who have griefs to need comfort; and what happy being is there in this world of sin and trouble who has never known that hour which made it welcome? Who is there, amongst us all, young or old, from the child who sobs because it cannot spell the difficult word of three letters, to the mature baby who frets over nobler trifles, and grieves because the fruits of to-day do not repay the cares of yesterday, who has never stood in need of comfort; and never gladly received the blessed gift, let it be the mere gilded bauble, bright and beautiful to the eye, or the pure and refined gold whose worth and beauty is intrinsic?

At this time Anne Grey, harassed, grieved, and annoyed, stood in need of a comforter—and she found one. Was it a false, a flattering, a deceitful one? Nay, never mind! What does that signify?

Have I not said how little it matters, so that comfort be administered, whether it is false or real.

In Charlotte Daventry she found one the most considerate and the most flattering. Charlotte applauded her conduct, and advised her to pursue her course, though indeed she foresaw many difficulties in it. She foresaw that her mother would not easily relinquish the idea of her marrying some one, if not Robert Dodson. It would require great firmness on Anne's part to elude this evil—this almost sin. Yes ! Charlotte Daventry placed before her the *sin* of marrying one person, with heart and affections engaged to another. She painted, in glowing colours, the deficiencies of Robert Dodson,—the chance of happiness for one like Anne, united to such a husband ! Anne recoiled from the idea. But Charlotte then sketched a more charming picture. A union with one such as Edward Temple—with every thought in unison with hers—with sentiments, knowledge, tastes, pursuits, such as she could respect, admire, and love. She painted a fascinating picture of felicity in such a union.

Anne's cheek glowed ; the tear and the smile trembled together in her downcast eye. Was not happiness like this worth a struggle ?

“ It is well ! ” thought Charlotte, as she looked on her. “ It is well. She loves—she *shall* love, and she shall have her reward ! ” and then again she spoke, and with tearful eyes, and burning cheeks, Anne listened to her flattering words.

But there were times in which she examined *herself*. In sober moods she reflected on the course to be pursued. Charlotte had opened her eyes to the strength of her attachment to Edward Temple, and, as she anxiously questioned herself whether she were indeed acting right, whether she, perhaps, ought not to sacrifice her own fancied happiness to the wishes of her parents, she could only answer, as, perhaps, a secret hope might make her desire to answer ; she could only agree with Charlotte in believing her line of conduct the proper one.

To less sensitive minds than Anne's there would have been little cause of distress ; but it was not so with her. She saw no way of getting out of her distresses. She was most unhappy in the idea of displeasing her parents ; and yet, by nothing but her patient and gentle submission to every unkind look and word that fell from her father or her mother on the subject, could she hope to mitigate their

displeasure. Another cause for distress existed in William's increasing love for Charlotte, and on this subject again she felt some difficulty in knowing what course to pursue ; and this added to her own cause of uneasiness, gave her a greater feeling of depression and unhappiness than she had ever yet experienced.

She really stood in need of a comforter, and nothing could equal the attention, the consideration, the affectionate sympathy which was bestowed on her by Charlotte : forgetting self, she seemed to think only of her.

The gratitude and love which conduct like this called forth may be imagined, and all the affection, the warmth of gratitude that a heart such as Anne Grey's was capable of giving, were bestowed and lavished on Charlotte Daventry.

Yes, they were bestowed, and Charlotte Daventry smiled as she saw their bestowal. Was it the happy smile of self-approving virtue? The smile of conscious benevolence? Oh, yes ! if we had listened to Anne Grey—" Oh, yes ! if Charlotte Daventry smiled it might well be such a smile as this ! Well may she smile if the well-earned love of grateful hearts can make her smile ! " Yes ! Anne Grey ! Such would have been your answer.

There are few people, *very* few, I should hope, who are so thoroughly unhappy as to have no one ray of comfort to which to turn—no one bright spark to shine out amidst the darkness—no one happy thought amidst a crowd of unhappy ones.

Anne Grey was not without a happy thought to turn to, and this one was of her sister, of her dear sister Sophy ! Sophy had now been married some time, and the accounts from her had always been most pleasing. In all her letters, from the period of her marriage till the present time, she spoke warmly of her happiness—of the devotedness of her husband—of her increasing love for him—her grateful sense of the blessing of such a husband's ardent affection.

Sophy Stoketon was right in considering it such. Let all who have experienced that blessing, or who have more sadly learnt its value by its reverse, say whether indeed the devoted, constant love of a husband is not a blessing worthy to be prized and cherished. All who have known this happiness will agree with me ; but still more will they, the forlorn, the wretched, the broken-hearted ! who pine alone—who sit and weep over times gone by :—when the

cold, neglectful husband, breathed to them of nought but love and constancy : when he, who once watched her every look and motion, and listened to each word in eager fondness, now leaves her, lonely, deserted,—weeping, perhaps to cast his eyes of love on others,—when he now leaves the once adored and happy wife. As the tears fall silently down her care-worn face, does she not think with bitter envy of the lost possession of that treasure—the devoted love of a husband? Yes, yes ! it once was her's, and she repaid it, by the full gift of all the strength, the depth of woman's calm, unchanging love ! She gave her heart—her affections—her whole soul—ah ! too much perhaps, forgetful of her God ! and that gift which had been sought for and won, where is it now ? It is despised—neglected—cast aside ! She tries to smile against hope ; she tries to hide a bursting heart under a placid brow ; to seem happy, that thus she may chance to win back that wavering heart. But no ! He comes—he speaks in careless displeasure—in cutting sarcasm, or perhaps, still worse to bear, he scarcely speaks—he scarcely heeds her ! It is too much ! He sees her weep—he has seen her smile ; in angry impatience he turns away muttering, ‘What folly !’ and again she is left to weep alone in the bitter earnestness of a bursting heart ! Yes ! let those who have known the bright reverse be thankful. Let them acknowledge their blessedness ! Let them cherish and guard the precious possession, so soon, so easily lost.

But why have I digressed so long from Sophy and her happiness ? She spoke with delight of Alford Abbey, Lord Stoketon's place ; her new home. It was the most charming place that ever was seen. She was very impatient that they all should see it, and so was her dear George.

She was charmed with Lord Stoketon's mother and sisters. Nothing could be so kind and delightful as they were ; so amiable, and so fond of him ! They had been staying at Alford, and now she and Lord Stoketon were going to see them at Lady Stoketon's pretty house. In short, Sophy was perfectly happy.

“By the bye,” she added, in one of her letters ; “I forgot to tell you that I had met an old flame of mine here, Captain Herbert. It is odd enough that he should happen to live in this neighbourhood ;” and she added, in her letter to Anne, “I wonder, Anne, how I could ever have had any penchant for him.—So inferior to

my own dear husband ! But you know I never did think much about him. What a different fate mine would have been had I been foolish enough to have preferred him ! George is so infinitely superior, so infinitely better calculated to make me happy."

In another part of the letter she again mentioned Captain Herbert. " He is certainly good-looking and agreeable, and has rather a taking manner. I cannot help thinking how fortunate I was to escape being captivated by him. I never was so happy, dearest Anne, as I am now ! Depend upon it, there is no happiness like a married life ! How I wish you were married : give my love to Charlotte, and tell her she must make haste and marry too, and let me know the names of all your admirers."

Then for the postscript, in the same letter there was this, which I insert as a hint to those who are married, or who are not married ; and for the amusement of all those of the opposite sex who love to talk and think of woman's folly.

" I have just got a crimson velvet gown from London. I believe I look very well in it. You cannot think how many compliments I get on my beauty from all the good people hereabouts. That is all owing to being a married woman. I never had half so many before. George says he likes to see me well dressed, so I am very particular."

" Fortune, I thank you !" said Charlotte to herself as she finished reading this letter. " Fortune ! I thank you that there are Captain Herberts and velvet gowns in the world !"

" Sophy writes in excellent spirits," said Anne.

" Yes, excellent ! She is very happy. How I long to see her," said Charlotte ; and the contemplation of Sophy's happiness, and the hope of seeing her before long, was a comforting subject to which Anne could turn from her own troubles and annoyances.

As the length and strength of her mother's lectures increased as to the propriety of girls marrying when they were asked so to do, their wickedness in refusing good offers—the heinous sin of ingratitude it involved—the wisdom of trusting to the judgment of their parents in all matters, but especially in the choice of the partner whom they, not their parents, were to live with, and love all the rest of their lives—as Robert Dodson's visits increased in duration and frequency, Anne found it very essential to have one pleasing

thought to which she could turn, and she thought with pleasure of the promised visit to Sophy, which would at once remove her so many miles both from Mr. Robert Dodson and her troubles at home.

Anne felt that the cares of the world had wonderfully increased within the last few months. She felt, as many have felt before her, that life was truly not the splendid, happy thing she had imagined it as a child. If each year troubles were to increase as they had done in the last—if the prophecy of kind old gouty friends, great aunts and uncles, grandmothers and grandfathers, were realized, that promised her every year with considerate kindness, “that she would never be so happy again”—“that she must never expect to be so happy as she was now;” Anne felt that in life there was much to suffer, much to make her turn away from its troubles and vexations with an aching heart and tearful eyes.

“Yes,” she thought, “life at last is revealed to me in its real colours. I was unwilling to believe what I was told, but it is too true! There is indeed no happiness in the world! I saw and felt as a child. I now can see and feel as a woman. If this life were all,” thought Anne, and the tears started to her eyes, “it would indeed be little worth desiring!”

The tears rolled down her cheeks: they fell fast for a while: it was the thorough awakening from the childish dream of hope and joy—of hope and joy on earth. It was this which caused them to flow.

The beautiful is vanished, and returns not!

Coleridge.

But her tears were checked. A brighter hope soon chased them away. A subdued, yet radiant smile took their place. The dream was gone! but she woke to a brighter reality! Hope and joy were not extinct; their nature alone was changed. They rested on certain, not on transitory, things!

Oh! thou who dry'st the mourner's tear,
How dark this world would be,

If, when deceived and wounded here,
We could not fly to Thee !

.

When joy no longer soothes, or cheers.
And even the hope that threw
A moment's sparkle o'er our tears,
Is dimmed and vanished too !

Oh, who would bear life's stormy doom,
Did not thy wing of love
Come brightly wafting through the gloom,
One peace-branch from above !

Then sorrow touched by Thee grows bright
With more than rapture's ray ;
As darkness shows us worlds of light
We never saw by day.

Moore.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

WILL it be supposed that Anne Grey's view of life was always gloomy? Will it not be supposed that, though there was truth in her feelings, there was likewise some exaggeration?

The young are apt to exaggerate : they run into those extremes either of misery, or of happiness, from which calmer and more experienced minds are free. Having once felt disappointment, they expect always to feel it ; having once experienced sorrow, they expect always to experience it. Whilst their hearts are bleeding under the bitter wound, they cannot look forward ; they have not learnt to raise their hearts beyond the storm ; they cannot lift their eyes to a farther prospect, or submit in quiet cheerfulness. But another moment—joy returns ! unexpected welcome joy ! and where is the gloom? Like the morning mist which fades away under the bright, dispersing rays of the sun, all is vanished. All now is joy ;

there is no unhappiness in the world. It was a phantom—all is, all must be sunshine ; and so youth feels, despairs, and trusts again ; by turns all joy—all misery—all hope.

And yet there *is* an awakening to life, from the bright, child-like dream of bliss. There is—there must be ! for life is not that enchanting thing that in childhood we believe it to be ; that life of summer sunshine and song which we behold in youth. We know it is a life of struggles, of tears, of endless toils. Yet let the young awake from their dream and look with steady eyes upon reality. Life is there before them ! It has its bitter griefs : but, shrink not—it has more ! it has its calm content, its hope beyond this life—its heavenly hope. All is not woe ! and, with a heavenly hope before us, we still may turn with thankfulness to earth, and say with gratitude, that there is happiness even here.

Shall we then believe that Anne Grey's view of life always remained the same as at that moment, when care and trouble seemed to surround her ; when for the first time the world in its sad reality burst upon her heart—or shall we wish that it should ? Must we not wish that much which then she felt should remain ; but that still whilst the heavenly view is fixed, the earthly one should be softened from the cold loneliness with which *then* she depicted it ? There was exaggeration in her view ; and Anne soon perceived there was. She acknowledged that life was not so entirely a scene of suffering ; that the duty of cheerfulness would not be always a task.

And what, it will be asked, opened her eyes to the conviction of her exaggeration ? Like other things of greater import, it was effected by a trifle ! Mr. Grey returned from a ride to Chatterton, and on his entrance into the room where Mrs. Grey and Anne were seated, he said, “ I found Mr. Temple just arrived at the Foleys' : they have a few friends coming to-morrow, and they wish us all to go and meet them. What do you say, my dear ? I gave no positive answer.”

“ Oh ! certainly, we will go,” was Mrs. Grey's answer.

Anne went out of the room as soon as she was satisfied that the invitation would be accepted, to conceal a little flutter of pleasure.

The party went to Chatterton. Anne was met by Mr. Temple

with undoubted pleasure. He shook hands most cordially with her father ; he was very gracious to her mother, and listened patiently to her remarks of “ how glad she was to have the pleasure of seeing him,” “ how much she had feared it would have rained in the morning,” and “ how much pleasanter a drive was without rain.”

He then turned to Anne—the happy smile on his face seemed to say, for his reward. Never had his manner expressed so fully that she could reward him, and Anne forgot her melancholy view of life, as she listened that evening to his conversation, which was addressed almost exclusively to herself. She thought he had never been so agreeable : some of the party that he had never been less so.

William Grey might safely have accepted the Foleys’ invitation to Chatterton, for Frank Crawford was not there. William had not known this ; and as he listened to Charlotte Daventry’s animated expressions of pleasure at the prospect of the visit, he suddenly remembered he could not be of the party ; as he owed a visit to an old college friend who had always been pressing him to come and see his parsonage. He refused the offer of Charlotte’s hand as she said ‘ Good bye,’ in getting into the carriage ; walked into the house ;—scolded the servant for not bringing his gig to the door an hour sooner than he had ordered it ;—declared the horse looked as rough as if it had been out at grass all winter ; and drove nearly at a gallop the whole way to his friend’s new parsonage.

When there, he thought he never had seen a more ugly, uncomfortable place in his life, or ever known so rapid a change, as that in his old friend, from an agreeable companion, to one of the greatest bores on earth.

The next day he thought the house and his friend more bearable ; and on the next he heard that Frank Crawford was not at Chatterton : he thought he never had seen a more charming picture of a parsonage, and of clerical comfort ; or ever known a more sensible agreeable companion than in his old friend. He trotted his horse steadily, but briskly home on the third day, and as his father and mother, Anne and Charlotte drove up to the door, he was walking before the house ready to welcome them. He let his mother nearly fall, by taking away his hand just as she was depending on its assistance up the

steps, to help Charlotte Daventry to descend from the carriage. He forgot to say, 'how do you do?' to Anne, till he had followed Charlotte into the house; carrying her shawl for her, which Charlotte had thrown over his arm, with laughing familiarity, and a playful command to be useful. It seemed that the shawl must be very useful to William, for he was not inclined to return it. Charlotte had to ask twice for it, and to take it herself from his arm, before it was restored.

"Well, Anne," said William, at last to her, "you look better again. I am glad to be able to compliment you on your appearance. You looked wretchedly before you left home. Chatterton air, eh! Anne! Come, we'll have you a good girl after all;" and Anne was in danger of relapsing into her wretched looks again, if this was to be the subject to greet her at home.

She looked imploringly at William, and began endeavouring to open the newspaper, which lay untouched on the table, but without success.

"You have learnt one precious art since you left home, Anne," said William, after looking at her for a few minutes. "You have learnt the least easy way of opening a paper. Come, try again! or shall I help you?"

Anne, said, "William!" in an imploring tone, and William laughed and said, "Well, it is too bad, and we will wish them all a safe journey to Rome, and may they never come back again! There is a toast for you, Anne."

"Thank you," said she, hiding her face behind the newspaper, which at length was opened, and glancing apprehensively towards her father to see if he were listening. It was a satisfactory glance. Mr. Grey was deep in a business letter. Anne had changed her mind about the newspaper; after all her trouble, she thought it not worth looking at, and laid it quietly on the table.

"I am charmed with Miss Foley, William," said she, to her brother. "She improves so much on acquaintance."

"Yes, I told you that, long ago," said William; "before I had seen her three times, I told you she improved on acquaintance. That is a borrowed opinion of yours, Anne. Try again."

"Well then, Miss Foley is very unaffected, and has a great deal of information. Will that do, William?" said Anne, laughing.

“If you mean it as something new, certainly not. But never mind! there is nothing new under the sun.”

William saw Charlotte Daventry out of doors, amusing herself with the gambols of a favourite spaniel; he left the room, and was presently thinking nothing so interesting as the exuberant joy of a black and white spaniel.

The next day Anne was sitting with her mother in the drawing-room, when the door opened, and Mr. Foley and Mr. Temple were announced.

Anne's blush of pleasure could not be concealed: Mr. Temple perhaps thought it much to be preferred that it should not. She had just hoped that no visitors would come that morning, and Mrs. Grey had just agreed to the hope: but Mr. Temple was very agreeable, and Anne might be excused for changing her opinion.

Soon after their arrival, Mr. Grey came in. He invited Mr. Temple to Weston for a few days: he left Chatterton, and Anne thought at the moment that no virtue was comparable to that of hospitality. Soon afterwards Mr. Temple turned to her.

“I am so determined,” said he, “to see how you will get out of the difficulty of washing over that old woman's white cap in your drawing, Miss Grey, that I am coming here next week—thanks to Mr. Grey's kindness. Nay, do not tell me,” added he, seating himself once more by her, as Anne was beginning to exculpate herself and her old woman. “Do not pretend to say that you are not in a difficulty. At any rate, do not tell me. Let me have the pleasure of uncertainty—at least when it is upon nothing more than an old woman's cap. Uncertainty,” continued he, after a slight pause and looking at Anne, “uncertainty is not so pleasant, or endurable in all things.”

Anne smiled, but felt a little confused by Mr. Temple's look and manner, as he uttered the last words. She said something about the charms of uncertainty, which she certainly did not feel. Something, no doubt, very new and very sensible, only unluckily it was not quite intelligible. Uncertainty had insinuated itself into her meaning.

“I cannot feel the pleasure of uncertainty,” said Mr. Temple, in reply to her confused *éloge* on its charms, “in anything more serious than the fate of a drawing. But if certainty is denied me,

do not deny me the pleasure of anticipation. Let me at least anticipate a friendly welcome, Miss Grey," he continued, lowering his voice, and eagerly looking at her as he spoke.

Anne's blush was her only, perhaps her best, reply; Mr. Foley was taking leave, and Mr. Temple was obliged to take leave also, not without showing that he did it with regret; and Anne was left to the pleasures of anticipation. How often does the pleasure of anticipation exceed the delights of reality! How often do we turn from the long-expected event, which in anticipation has filled our hearts with gladness, and say, Is this then all? Was this worth the fluttering hope which made us neglect present happiness? The childish visions of pleasure to come which have caused the cheek to flush, the eyes to sparkle, and the heart to beat tumultuously—we all know, we all prophesy with demure wisdom to be vain and certain of disappointment. We can see for *others*, but we choose to shut our eyes for *ourselves*. Why is the present always the thing least charming, least enviable in life? Why, that which *is*, so inferior to that which *is to be*? Is it not because we are but travellers through life? The pilgrim looks forward in the land through which he is passing: his looks cannot rest on the road, which is but the passage to his home: the present is not for him, nor is it with us. We look onward—we anticipate. It is a feeling implanted in our nature. For ever disappointed, yet still untaught, we again look onward. And let us do so—let us not dwell in stupid indolence on the present. We may cast our hopes forward, for true it is that our home is not here—that we have no abiding place on earth—that we are passing forward to a land of promise—to the home of Eternity.

CHAPTER XL.

At the expected time Mr. Temple came to Weston, and satisfied himself about the old woman's cap; and he admired the cap, and the old woman so much, that he longed to call them his own. "Miss

Grey could not refuse to give him a drawing about which he had felt such a lively interest !”

But Anne did refuse, and the drawing became very valuable to her ; probably as a memento of her firmness, because she had refused to part with it ; for it had had no particular value to her before.

However that might be, it was carefully preserved ; and when, some time afterwards, Mrs. Foley selected it, as the very drawing to suit her Album, Anne blushed very deeply ; said something about keeping it to copy ; and substituted another in its place.

Anne found that each day spent in the society of Edward Temple increased the danger of loving him too much. She found that his agreeableness was not of a kind to decrease on more intimate acquaintance ; that his powers of conversation only seemed to increase, as time gave greater opportunity of judging of them. His sentiments remained the same. *They* were steady as they should be : but there was a continued charm of novelty in his manner of expressing them.

He talked much to Anne ; and she felt, that to hear him converse, was the most delightful thing that imagination could picture. He instructed—he amused ; he was gay or grave, lively or serious ; yet never was either at the wrong moment. To the world he was the clever and fastidious Mr. Temple ; but to Anne he revealed himself in a superior character ; as the man whose feelings, tastes and principles would ensure the happiness and form the charm of domestic life. Edward Temple, dropping the light tone of the mere conversation of society, had often talked to her of feelings, and opinions ; and Anne felt, as she listened to him, that she needed no excuse for having bestowed her affections on an object so worthy. She felt no longer any shame in owning to herself that she loved him ; yet it seemed to her modest, unassuming nature too presumptuous to believe that she could really have gained the affections of one so perfect as Edward Temple.

There is a shrinking modesty in some minds which will scarcely allow them to believe what vanity long before, in most, would have magnified into certainty. Had Anne Grey possessed any of that little, flattering, womanly quality, she would have been certain, long ago, that Edward Temple loved her. But now, though word and

look and manner told that tale, because she wanted that self-consoling gift, she doubted : though at last even she could doubt no more.

Ah ! Anne Grey ! why believe what he wishes you to believe ! Had it been soothed and flattered vanity alone that was touched and confided ; then it would have little signified ; then you might safely have believed, and you would have escaped unhurt ! But it was not vanity. It was your heart that was touched ! and where confiding vanity is safe, the confiding heart escapes not so unscathed.

Mr. Temple was now often at Weston. He always met Anne with an appearance of pleasure which she could not believe to be feigned. He entered with interest into everything which appeared to interest her. He took evident delight in her pursuits, and loved to talk with her of the books she was reading, and to mark the impression which they made on her mind. He was solicitous to hear her opinions, and to find that they coincided with his own. In her music, and drawing, there might be a selfish pleasure, mingled with his interest ; for he was passionately fond of both ; but still it was not on that account the less delightful to Anne. He had so much to say and to remark on them, that she felt that there were new and hidden subjects of pleasure, belonging to both, which she had never before imagined. He had always something new and entertaining to say on every subject. Anne, whose quick perceptions, and refined and intelligent mind, had long been without any one to call forth its powers and sensibilities, experienced the full delight arising from the society and conversation of such a person. Not only her heart, but her understanding, was captivated ; and when the time drew near for her to leave the neighbourhood, and she knew that she could not then see Edward Temple again for some length of time, she was forced to allow that she felt sorrow even in the prospect of a visit to her sister.

In his last parting with her, there had been so much beyond mere friendly regret in his manner of alluding to the longer separation which was about to take place, that Anne might well flatter herself that it could only proceed from a still warmer feeling than that of friendship. Still he left her without any explanation, and perhaps none was intended before her departure. He had, it is true, half asked her not to forget him. He had said, or rather he had insinua-

ted, that, however a few months might change *her* feelings, *his* could never change—the absence of years, or of months, could alike effect no change in him. He had spoken of his fears—Anne's heart whispered that he might have spoken of his hopes; but she only blushed and turned away her head as he spoke, or looked at her.

Edward Temple had said much that Anne could not forget: much to remember, and think of, and treasure up in her heart during the separation from him; much to make her hope that on his last visit to Weston, before her departure, all might be explained.

He came at the appointed time. There was a party staying in the house, consisting of the Foleys, Lord and Lady Hadley, Lady Emily Harville, Sir Henry Poynton, Anne's still constant friend and admirer, and a few other gentlemen.

Anne did not see Mr. Temple on his first arrival, for he had been late. She had vainly lingered in the drawing-room till the dressing bell had rung too long to allow her any more excuse either of work, drawing, music, or book, to engross her attention or to be put away, to delay her toilet. She had but just got to the top of the stairs, when she heard the door bell ring, and Mr. Temple was certainly come.

“How provoking!” thought Anne. “If I had only stayed a moment longer!” and then, as she opened her door, she blushed at her folly; and her heart beat rather quickly, as the task of dressing proceeded. She thought no half hour was ever before so long—no operation so tedious as that of adorning her person! And yet, when it was time for her to go down—when she was dressed—the last curl arranged, the last pin placed, the rings, the bracelets put on, the gloves in the hand—then Anne felt that a little more time would not have been unacceptable to gain composure before she went down and met Edward Temple.

Courage, however, never came with passively waiting for it! and so Anne perceived, and she walked down, and entered the drawing-room, not looking the less lovely for the delicate colour of agitation which tinged her cheek.

Mr. Temple was in the room. He had been talking to Mr. Foley, and was telling a good story for the entertainment of him, of Lady Hadley, and of Lady Emily Harville, who were all three listening, and evidently with great amusement.

As Anne opened the door, she saw his quick glance to ascertain who entered ; she saw his smile of pleasure—she heard him say in a hasty manner to Lady Hadley, as they were all eagerly listening for the finale of his story, “ Lady Hadley, I am sorry to disappoint you ! But I make a point never to finish a story. It would be doing the greatest injustice to the imagination of my auditors, to suppose they could not finish it themselves ;” and then, turning away from the exclamations of “ Pray go on !” “ How provoking !” from all three, he was in a moment at Anne’s side, and, having shaken hands with her, and seen her half bashful, half delighted look, as he addressed her, he seated himself by her.

Anne was separated from Mr. Temple at dinner, and could only see, from the opposite side of the table, that Lady Emily Harville made many attempts to call forth his agreeableness, and failed. Edward Temple chose rather to watch Anne Grey, who, conscious of being observed, could seldom withdraw her attention from Sir Henry Poynton, who sat by her. He never before had so fully possessed her apparent attention to his interesting stories ; and never possessed so little of it in reality. But a suspicion of the truth sometimes flashed, even across the rather obtuse mind of Sir Henry, when a ‘ yes,’ instead of a ‘ no,’ fell from the pretty lips of his sweet ‘ Miss Anne Grey,’ and a bright smile lighted up her eyes, when, having reached the climax of misfortune, he almost hoped that a sympathetic tear might have been trembling there.

In the evening, Edward Temple devoted himself to Anne ; and, whilst listening to his entertaining conversation when others were near, his more serious, expressive tone when apart with her, that evening, glided quickly and happily away. He had all but confessed his love. He had all but asked her for a return ! and Anne was left in the delightful conviction, that the looked for avowal must shortly follow.

Fate, or Robert Dodson, the next morning, seemed perverse. Soon after breakfast Robert Dodson arrived. He was merely come for a morning visit, but Robert Dodson carried his ideas of a morning visit to the full extent of the term, and generally remained the whole morning. Unfortunately a chair happened to be vacant at the side of Anne. There he seated himself, and was so persevering in his civility, that Anne could only think with a sigh of the diffe-

rent manner in which that morning might have been passed, as she resigned herself to her fate, and tried not to think of Mr. Temple.

Mr. Temple was not so forbearing as Anne. He evidently considered Robert Dodson a bore, and that it required a large share of self-command not to be out of temper with him.

“How impossible it is always to be in a good humour!” said Edward Temple, to Lady Emily Harville, as he threw himself into a chair with something like a groan, as, in despair, he relinquished Anne to the surveillance of Robert Dodson.

Charlotte Daventry was seated near, and had been talking to, Lady Emily. Mr. Temple had seldom spoken much to her of late. He might, perhaps, be too much engrossed with Anne! She looked at him for a moment as he spoke. She had been watching with anxiety as he talked to Anne, and now as he addressed Lady Emily she gazed upon him intently for an instant, whilst a bright flush passed across her brow: a heavy sigh burst from her lips, and she bent over her work the instant after, as if she strove to conceal some strange and painful emotion.

But Edward Temple did not observe it. He seemed more occupied with his own thoughts, and with watching Anne Grey, as she listened to Sir Henry Poynton's never-ending adventures. At length he seemed to rouse himself, and began to talk to Lady Emily Harville. Charlotte Daventry once more raised her head from her work, and fixed her eyes upon his countenance. It seemed as though she were endeavouring to read his thoughts. What was there in her gaze? It was singular. There was a mournful tenderness, an intensity of interest expressed in her large dark eyes, that any who forgot her affection for Anne might have interpreted into a different feeling than that of friendly interest. Surely love dwelt in that gaze! Edward Temple chanced to turn towards her: their eyes met:—he looked for an instant:—the look that met his was not to be mistaken: he turned away with a half scornful, contemptuous, and disgusted air. Charlotte Daventry abruptly rose; the colour mounted to her face—to her temples: she rose and quitted the room.

There was something in Edward Temple's manner to Charlotte, at various times, which surprised and puzzled Anne. She could

not understand it, and, at last, she had ceased to try. We know that once his attentions to Charlotte had caused a little feeling of jealousy. At other times his inattention, his almost rudeness, his unkindness of manner had vexed her in a different way : on one or two occasions he had begun to speak to her of Charlotte, had seemed as if anxious to warn her of something—Anne scarcely knew what ! he had almost insinuated that she ought not to trust her—to love her so confidingly and unreservedly. Charlotte seemed perfectly unconscious of anything. She praised Mr. Temple warmly, and appeared to feel all, if not more than all, the natural interest in him, as one beloved by her cousin.

Anne could not fathom the kind of mystery that seemed to hang over Mr. Temple's conduct with respect to her. She felt at times inclined to accuse him of caprice and of unkindness—but then it was Edward Temple ! *He* could not be capricious or unkind !

The evening passed. There were no opportunities of private conversation, and Anne retired to rest without any explanation having ensued, but comforted by the feeling that it had probably been desired. She had now only one morning more. However anxious Edward Temple might have been to prolong his stay at Weston, Anne knew that he was obliged to leave on the morrow. He was summoned to Paris on business relating to a friend, which admitted of no delay, and which, he had told her, would keep him absent for a month and, probably, even for a still longer period. He meant to stay till after luncheon, and Anne could not conceal a little smile of pleasure as she heard him asking her mother's permission, at breakfast, “to annoy her so long.”

Anne had just wished good-bye to the Hadleys, and to Lady Emily Harville who had come with them ; she had seated herself to a table in the drawing-room to finish some music she had been copying, and she had left Sir Henry Poynton busily occupied in a conversation with Charlotte Daventry, which she felt sure would last till luncheon-time. Edward Temple could not resist the attraction into the inner drawing-room where Anne was seated. He followed her, seated himself by her—began to speak on indifferent subjects, but soon returned to one more interesting ; he began to speak of love—of hope—of fear. Anne's heart beat quick, she half averted her head to conceal her confusion and happiness, but she was saved—Sir

Henry Poynton, provoking man! Sir Henry Poynton actually had the barbarity to leave Charlotte Daventry, and to come and interrupt the conversation.

He came with his usual perseverance, drew a chair close to Anne, and, looking at Mr. Temple, begged to know what he was talking of. Edward Temple left it to Anne to answer. With an ill-concealed air of mortification he turned away, took up a book, and pretended to be engaged in reading.

Anne tried to reply, to understand Sir Henry Poynton's questions, but she completely failed! She had not the slightest idea of the meaning of anything he uttered; at length she got up, said she thought of walking: Sir Henry offered to accompany her—she thought she would not, and then, as she saw Edward Temple looking anxiously at her, blushed deeply at her seeming fickleness.

However we all know that 'second thoughts are best,' and so she adhered to her resolution of not walking, and met with her reward. Sir Henry Poynton soon left her to speak to Mr. Foley in the adjoining room, and she was once more left alone with Edward Temple.

The book was dropped. His eyes were turned towards her. He spoke, but it was in a hurried manner, for it seemed that Sir Henry was about to leave Mr. Foley and join them again.

"Miss Grey," said he, in a low agitated voice, "I have much I would say to you, but there is no time. I find I am scarcely to be allowed a moment—I cannot say what I wish—I cannot explain my feelings. But I must not speak of it now—it is too late—I am again to be interrupted.—But you understand me? You will forgive me my abruptness? One word to tell me I need not despair—that when I meet you again I may be allowed to explain! I ask but one word," he continued in increasing earnestness and tenderness of tone and manner, whilst Anne, too much agitated to speak, continued silent. "One look, one word! if you will not bid me despair! Dearest Miss Grey, will you refuse me all hope?"

"No, no," said Anne, in a low and hurried voice, as for an instant she turned towards him.

Her hand was taken; silently pressed in his. There was time for no more—Sir Henry Poynton had uttered his last words to Mr. Foley, and was close to them. But Edward Temple was sa-

tified : the words—the look of Anne as she turned was sufficient.

And Anne likewise! she felt that she had indeed heard enough to ensure her happiness. She felt that she stood engaged to Mr. Temple; that he had engaged himself to her almost as certainly as if a longer explanation had taken place. There had been time for no more than those few words, but those were sufficient! Anne was assured of his love : she could not doubt it; and he was assured of hers.

As Edward Temple took leave, he pressed her hand, and said, in a low voice, as he earnestly looked at her, “ I have dared to hope ! You will not forget me then, Miss Grey ? ”

Anne’s look was the reply—the promise that he should not be forgotten. It was read—fondly watched, and ardently returned. But the hand was obliged to be relinquished. He could linger no longer ; and in a few minutes more Edward Temple was gone.

In the first moments after his departure, Anne was too much agitated with delightful recollection to allow even sorrow for his departure to find a place in her mind. There was a confusion in her happiness which rendered her for a time incapable of thinking and feeling anything, but that one delightful conviction that he loved her.

CHAPTER XLI.

“ WHERE is Charlotte ? ” said Mrs. Grey, when the door was closed after Mr. Temple’s departure. “ Where is Charlotte ? She was not in the room when Mr. Temple went, I think. What can have become of her ? ”

“ I will go and look for her, ” said Anne, who was not sorry to leave the room, at a moment when her thoughts and feelings were so overpoweringly occupied ; moreover she longed to confide to Charlotte the happiness which was swelling in her breast. Charlotte had been her confidante throughout, and had appeared to sympathize warmly in her feelings.

Anne went to her room. She knocked at the door ; but no one answered, and she went in to see if Charlotte were there ; and as she entered she saw her standing at the opposite window. Charlotte was roused on hearing the door open, and hastily turned round.

As she saw Anne, she looked wildly at her ; lifted her hand and advanced a step with an attitude of defiance, whilst her eyes flashed, and she half screamed out, “ Must I bear this—this too ! I cannot—will not !—You are come to see—to look—to—” but she suddenly stopped : looked on the ground, and then again at Anne ; but it was with an altered expression to that which had the moment before struck with surprise and horror upon the heart of Anne ; it had faded, and she looked up with a smile on her face.

“ Well Anne,” said she, gaily, “ What do you think of my bit of acting ? You must have thought,” and she took up a bottle which was on the table by which she stood—it was a thick glass bottle which had contained some perfume—“ You must have thought that I had been indulging in some private potations from such as this ! ” holding up the bottle and laughing.

She had scarcely uttered the words when the bottle which she held broke in her hand. The colour fled from her cheeks : Anne hastened towards her, to ask whether she had hurt herself, was assured she had not, and then stooped to pick up the scattered pieces of glass, whilst Charlotte, pale as death, muttered to herself in a low deep voice, inaudible to Anne, “ That was a rude grasp—it was a rude grasp ! ” and she gave a convulsive shudder as she twice repeated the words, whilst her eyes were steadily, yet vacantly fixed on the ground.

Anne looked up as she saw the shudder. “ I am sure you are hurt,” said she, in alarm, to Charlotte. “ Dear Charlotte, you look pale,” added she, with increasing alarm, as she saw Charlotte’s face pale as death. “ It must have hurt you.”

“ No indeed,” said Charlotte, “ only a scratch. There is no blood *yet* ! ” she said, as she seated herself on the foot of the bed, whilst Anne went to a table for water.

“ A scratch indeed ! The wound lies deeper—deeper than this ! ” and the convulsive tremor again shook her whole frame.

“ Yes,” said she aloud to Anne. “ I find I am a little hurt—a little scratch ! But I would not allow it at first, for fear of alarming

you. There, it bleeds now, you see :” and there was a wound in the inside of the hand, which began to bleed, as Charlotte stretched it out to Anne. Charlotte shuddered again as she saw the blood.

“ I am a fool about blood, Anne!—look, it did not bleed till you came near. I shall say, Anne,” trying to overcome her fright, and smiling gaily, “ I shall say that you are my murderess, as the blood only flows on your approach! You know the old superstitious test of a murderer? If the real murderer was brought into the presence of his victim, the dead body paid him the compliment of bleeding. Now you see, Anne, the blood has flowed only on your approach. How will you be punished? decapitated! or hanged! or—shall I stab you to the heart?”

Charlotte did not look at Anne as she finished her sentence. She was stooping to look at the hand which Anne was bathing. The last words were uttered, after a moment’s pause, in a lower voice, and Anne feared she must be suffering, from the marked difference of her tone, and the expression of pain, and almost anguish, with which they were half inaudibly muttered.

“ I will bear to be decapitated, hanged, or stabbed to the heart—”

“ Will you?” said Charlotte, raising her head quickly, and looking at Anne who was still speaking,—

“ Or stabbed to the heart by *you*, Charlotte,” continued Anne, half gaily, “ if you will only confess how much you are hurt, and let me have Hickman to doctor your wound.”

“ *Confess!*” said Charlotte, looking up wildly: but as Anne mentioned Hickman she smiled. “ Ah! very well! If you like. But really I have no great hurt to confess; only I told you I was foolish about blood.”

Anne rung the bell. “ It was extraordinary,” said she, “ how it could have happened. It must have been a very brittle bottle.”

“ My piece of acting has ended ill,” observed Charlotte, “ for it has frightened you, and frightened me too. But I shall soon be better, and ready to hear—all about it—about *him!*” She slightly shuddered as she uttered the last words. “ Ah! a twinge again,—this provoking hand!” and she started up and almost stamped upon the ground, as if overcome with pain into all loss of patience.

“ Anne, what a child I am! am not I?” she said, as she again

quietly seated herself, "Was that colour brought by me or by *him*, Anne?" smiling at her. "Ah! both I see! we must talk about that by and bye."

"No, no, Charlotte," said Anne, colouring still more. "Never mind that! I can only think of you now;" and her face and manner expressed as much as she said.

Charlotte looked at her for a moment; and admiration, or some other powerful emotion, was strongly expressed in her countenance.

At this moment the housekeeper entered. The hand was looked at, properly pitied, wondered over, doctored, and carefully bound up by Mrs. Hickman.

Then Charlotte turned gaily to her cousin, and said, "I am better and braver now, Anne. I was a sad simpleton, to make so much fuss about a scratch. I was quite upset by it; but I believe I was not very well before. And now, Anne, go down again, and I will come presently. You may say I hurt my hand a little, which detained you so long. But," she added, "do not say a word of how impatient I have been! Do not expose my want of courage! No! do not stay," continued she, as Anne seemed unwilling to leave her. "I really am quite well, and will come down presently myself." Anne left the room and returned to the drawing-room.

Shortly after, Charlotte entered; looking rather pale, and her hand tied up. Mrs. Grey and the Foleys were there, and expressed a great deal of concern at the accident. She only laughed, and said it was a mere trifle. Her usual colour shortly returned; she seemed in excellent spirits, and was soon amusing the party by her lively account of her own cowardice, and Anne's alarm in seeing it. Anne felt satisfied, and she had time to think once more of herself and—of Edward Temple.

The Foleys left Weston the next day. Anne was glad of the relief of being alone again. Her thoughts, as may be imagined, were deeply occupied in the consideration of the events of the last few days. She felt that her future happiness was dependent upon what had just occurred, and yet, that happiness was perhaps depending on a chance. She had parted from Edward Temple! how could she say that she should ever meet him again, or if she did, that it might be with unchanged feelings?

Love will always doubt and be fearful, even when reason speaks most decidedly against its doubts and fears ; and Anne was not free from the usual failings and weakness of the passion. She, with others, allowed the sway of fear and doubt, to trouble the calm serenity of her love ; but reason and her calmer judgment always reproved her. They told her that her fears of Edward Temple's intentions and constancy were needless ; and, whilst reason held its influence, she trusted in undoubting confidence to his return to claim her for his bride.

Still he was absent : and how could she help feeling melancholy and timid about the future ? She thought that many evils might arise beyond the power of any human being to foresee or avert. It was not necessary to tax Edward Temple with inconstancy, to find a reason for never seeing him again—or never seeing him again in happiness. What mortal can ever say that when we part, in fond, and almost certain anticipation of a happy re-union, that that meeting will ever again take place ; or, if it should, that it will be in happiness ? What need have we to look around for causes of fear ! Is there not one ever near us ? Is not Death ever beside us—ever ready to set at once its cold chill hand on our fondest, warmest hopes : to say ‘ you meet not again—the farewell has been uttered, but the meeting none shall ever witness more.’

Yet Anne had other causes for fear ; though they should escape the grasping hand of death ; though they should meet again, yet it was not certain how they should meet. In her mother's solicitude for her speedy marriage, she saw reason for alarm. She was not aware of the motives which actuated her mother's conduct. If she had, perhaps she might not have hesitated to declare her love for Edward Temple. She would not then have feared that any other pretensions would have interfered with his claims : for he was rich as Robert Dodson or George Foley. He was still more ! he was fashionable, and distinguished.

But Anne, in the innocence of her heart, never viewed her mother's projects in this light—never thought of her lover as the ‘ *bon parti* !’ She only thought of him as the Edward Temple whom she loved, and who had bestowed his love on her.

Perhaps, could she have entered into the probable effect of her

communication on her mother, she might still have been almost equally unwilling, from a different motive, to have confided to her, her feelings and hopes. Edward Temple had not yet decidedly proposed : had she known Mrs. Grey's views on the subject, she would have feared that there would have been such overpowering civility and *empressement* in her mother's manner towards him, as delicacy would have shuddered to think of. Should he return when she was once more settled at home, and declare himself openly, it would then be necessary to make the avowal to both her parents, and she must endeavour to obtain their consent to what she almost feared they might not approve.

But the time was not yet come which required the avowal. Alas ! was it certain ever to come ? and yet why did Anne entertain a doubt ? How could she do so consistently with her good opinion of her lover's character ? She repelled the idea ! Yes ! the time must come, if unhappy and unavoidable circumstances did not interpose. But should Edward Temple remain abroad, should George Foley return to England, should either his or Robert Dodson's acceptance again be urged by her father and mother, how could she resist ? She had once before felt the misery of disobliging them, and she could scarcely bear the idea of subjecting herself to their displeasure a second time.

With such thoughts and fears she vainly tried to struggle, as day after day Robert Dodson appeared at Weston ; whilst Edward Temple was still absent, with the certainty of not seeing him again for the space of two months at least.

CHAPTER XLII.

AT this time, and for some months past, Anne's thoughts had been more and more engaged on a subject of great and painful interest. She had occasionally observed in Charlotte Daventry a strangeness of manner : for a while it recurred but seldom, and was therefore,

at first, soon forgotten ; it was not till it gained strength and certainty by repetition, that Anne allowed herself to think so seriously of it as to believe it a matter for anxiety.

It has been said how much Anne's affection for Charlotte had increased, and that she loved her with all the warmth of her affectionate heart. Any one may imagine the horror of that moment in which a suspicion first flashes across the mind of the existence of mental derangement in those we love ! Any one may imagine the added horror of finding the suspicion gradually gaining ground, and at length assuming the appearance of certainty. Anne Grey experienced this horror when, for the first time, the suspicion forced itself upon her mind with regard to Charlotte Daventry. She would scarcely allow herself to believe it. She combated the idea ; it was too horrible—it could not be ! and for a time she was satisfied.

During a period Charlotte betrayed no symptoms of insanity. She was the same affectionate, cheerful, and intelligent girl as ever. Anne forgot her fears. There had been moments of strangeness, perhaps a word, a look ; but why should this dwell on her mind ?

Then came a recurrence, and with it Anne's fears returned ; and again, and again, within the last two months, this strangeness had happened. It had escaped the observation of her family, and Anne tried to believe that it must be her own imagination. She felt that it would be kinder not to mention her suspicions to any one, whilst she herself watched Charlotte with the most painful interest.

William's love for Charlotte still continued a source of annoyance to Anne. Charlotte retained her unconscious manner, and her total ignorance of the nature of his feelings. "She is quite blinded by the sisterly character of her own affection for him," thought Anne.

Yet a little circumstance occurred about this time, which, for a while, created doubts on this subject. One day she went to William's sitting-room in quest of something she wanted. She opened the door rather gently, for she was thinking. Does any one know the difference between the brisk, rattling, noisy way of doing things, when we are not thinking ; and the quiet way of performing all such things as moving a chair, poking a fire, opening or shutting a door, when we are busily engaged in thought ? Anne Grey was deep in thought when she opened the door of William's room, and she opened it so gently that those within were not aware of her approach.

She stood for an instant, then quietly shut the door, and withdrew.

But what, or who, had she seen to make her abandon her wish for what she sought? Merely her brother, and her cousin!

The room was a long one, opening at the farthest end into a larger part where the fire was placed; and at this end, standing over the fire, were her brother William and Charlotte Daventry. The instant Anne saw them, she said to herself, "William has proposed, and been accepted:" she quickly withdrew, and closed the door with even less noise than she had opened it.

She expected, as a matter of course, that when alone with Charlotte, she should have to receive an avowal of the mutual love between William and herself. But no such avowal ensued. Charlotte did not seem disposed to make any disclosure, nor did it appear that she had any to make.

Anne was surprised. Why should Charlotte conceal the truth from her? She could not have been deceived in what she saw. Charlotte and William were standing as lovers together. It was strange then that she should not tell her of William's proposal, and of her acceptance of him; but as no intelligence was likely to be gained in a direct way, she determined to lead to the subject by talking of William.

The next morning, as they sat alone together, she began rather abruptly to speak of her brother.

"I wish William would marry," said she. "Do you think it is likely?" She turned to Charlotte, and examined her countenance as she spoke; but there was no confusion; nothing indicative of consciousness: quite the reverse.

"I do not know indeed," she replied, with much more carelessness than Anne, and as if she were scarcely thinking of what she said. "I suppose he will—all men do:" and then, after a slight pause, as if arousing herself to attend, she added, "But as to William, I really think that he loves you and me so well that he is in no want of a wife to make him happy! But, perhaps, the day will come when he will think differently, and I hope it will—he ought to marry."

This was decisive. Anne saw there must be some mistake: it was evident that Charlotte was ignorant of William's love for her, and still farther from returning the feeling.

But a few more days were to elapse before Anne quitted Weston for her visit to her sister and Lord Stoketon at Alford; but these few days were not suffered to pass without distress once more in the unromantic shape of Mr. Robert Dodson.

Certainly some good kind of stupid people do contrive to cause just as much, and more uneasiness than if they were very clever and intellectual. Robert Dodson had proposed to Anne once. *That*, surely, was making his powers of annoyance sufficiently important! He had been a constant source of alarm and uneasiness to her ever since. Surely this might have been sufficient for any good sort of man! But, no! He put forth greater claims to distinction. He proposed a second time! only the day before her departure for Alford; and this time he was prudent! he spoke not to Anne herself, but to Mrs. Grey for her!

Mrs. Grey gave him very kind encouragement; she said, she was certain that Anne must be touched with such a proof of constancy, gave him her best wishes, and sent him home with the happy expectation of receiving a favourable reception and a favourable answer from Anne on the morrow.

The morrow came, and Mr. Robert Dodson came with the morrow, but alas! he came only to be disappointed!

Mrs. Grey met him with the very kindest, and the very longest, face that it was possible to conceive. She was full of affectionate pity, condolences, and hopes. But, she grieved to say it, Anne was obstinate. In short, she would not accept his very obliging offer of presenting her with his name, wealth, and heart.

Still Mrs. Grey advised him not to be distressed, for Anne was sure to change her mind in a little time; she was sure to see her error: Mr. Robert Dodson had only to persevere; and, to do him credit, he thought Anne Grey's love was worth perseverance; so he took Mrs. Grey's advice, and rode quietly home to sit quietly musing over the fire at home that evening.

But not so quietly was Anne allowed to enjoy her home fire-side. The Robert Dodson matrimony, and George Foley question, was duly discussed, and Anne was again doomed to a repetition of all the indignation, reproaches, and wonderings of her mother, and the grave looks and serious questions of her father.

She was again and again assured by her mother that she must

inevitably be an old maid (whether there was anything very frightful and alarming in that assurance I cannot say); she was reminded of her mother's kindness and generosity in saying that if she had accepted George Foley she never would have said a word more about Robert Dodson, and there were many more unanswerable reasons urged over, and over again.

But Anne felt that she had now a reason to give for her refusal, though she hardly knew whether it would be acknowledged as such. However, in a private conference with her father, she ventured to confess her attachment to Edward Temple, and to relate all that had passed between them during his last visit at Weston. She spoke with trembling limbs, burning cheeks, and faltering tongue; but she was fully rewarded for all it had cost her to make the confession, as she saw her father's delighted look, and heard his candid acknowledgment that nothing had ever before given him so much pleasure.

"Well, Anne," said he, "you need not fear ever to have Robert Dodson's claims urged again. From what has passed, I should look upon you as engaged to Mr. Temple, and quite unauthorized, had you even a *very* decided inclination," smiling, and patting Anne's cheek, "to engage yourself to any other person—to your cousin, for instance," added he. "With Mr. Temple's consent, Anne, I dare say you might be allowed; but I am sorry to say that without it, it would be quite impossible that I could give you mine."

Anne smiled, and kissed her father with delight and gratitude, as he playfully watched her blushing face; and then Mr. Grey continued more seriously to speak of Mr. Temple, and to speak of him in the highest terms—to speak with satisfaction at the prospect of having such a son-in-law, to speak with certainty of his intentions. The proposal was only delayed, but he could not doubt that it would be made when she again saw him. It would be absurd to suppose otherwise. Anne listened with delight to what her father said—to hear his approval—to hear his praises of Edward Temple—to hear him assure her that there could be no cause for doubt, was indeed delightful to her.

"You are a most reasonable girl, Anne," said Mr. Grey, as he kissed her once more; "but I don't know what I should have said of you, if you had not been satisfied with one such lover as Edward Temple."

Anne could laugh, and blush, and be very well pleased to be called reasonable in the way most agreeable to her own feelings.

Mr. Grey reproached himself, in good earnest, for having distressed his good little Anne, but he playfully scolded her for keeping him in ignorance of what had given him so much pleasure.

“If you wish to prove your forgiveness, Anne, you must ask me to Temple-court. I hear it is a beautiful place, and I shall be satisfied with forgiveness in that way.”

Another kiss, and an “Oh, papa!” was her answer, as she half concealed her face by laying it against that of her father.

“Well, then, I may look forward to a visit to Temple-court?” said Mr. Grey, as she shortly after quitted the room with a lightened heart, and prepared for her journey to Alford the next day, with that very comfortable assurance of happiness to come, which, in real life, as well as in novels, is the almost certain forerunner of evils!

CHAPTER XLIII.

ANNE, perhaps, had sufficient present trouble to avert the calamities promised to her by her comfortable, yet dangerous, confidence in happiness to come; for her carriage neither broke down with her on the road, nor, on her arrival at Alford that night, did she find her sister Sophy, as might have been expected, calling in agony on sister Anne, whilst her blue-beard of a husband was threatening her life or her furniture in one of his customary paroxysms of rage. Nor, less immediately appalling, did she find Sophy with altered looks and forced gaiety; Lord Stoketon in gloomy silence; both starting as the clock struck twelve in a peculiarly deep and solemn manner. Sophy hurrying Anne in breathless speed to her apartment, locking her in, and telling her not to be frightened if she heard sounds during the night. Anne seeing her shudder and pale with haste and fright as she left the room; then dropping asleep for

a few minutes, awake again with the sound of incessant groans and heavy steps pacing backwards and forwards in a room above, below, or on one side of her!

No! Anne had none of these evils to befall her, but, on her safe arrival, was only met in the hall by her dear sister Sophy, more blooming, pretty and lively than ever, who ran out with eager joy to welcome her to her new home; and Lord Stoketon, with a face of pleasure, watching the meeting, and putting in a word when Sophy could give him time, or Anne attend or think of anything but dear Sophy, and her blooming joyous looks.

Oh! it was a happy moment for Anne! She forgot all her anxieties, even all her joys; and love, and Edward Temple was forgotten in the new delight of seeing Sophy once more, and seeing her so happy!

"What do you think of us, Anne?" said Sophy, as they seated themselves in the drawing-room. "Don't you think that George is looking better than ever he did before?"

"Yes, indeed," said Anne, "and you too, Sophy. I never saw you both looking so well."

"And happy as the day is long, dearest Anne!" said Sophy, giving her a kiss that betokened happiness; and then, looking at her husband and putting her hand on his arm, "I can assure you, Anne, that he is the very best husband in the world; I hate praising him to his face, but it is so true that I cannot help it! And now, George, you must know what I am bound to expect in return!"

"I suppose I must tell Anne that you are the best wife in the world, and make me happier than ever husband was made before!" said Lord Stoketon, giving her a delighted and affectionate look that told its own story, and vouched for the truth of the words. "But what will Anne say to us, if she thinks that love-making is begun again! I am sure, Anne, you thought we had enough of it before, and you hated me with all your heart for taking up Sophy's time. Now, did not you? You have never forgiven me, I fear!"

"If I had not before," said Anne, smiling, whilst her hand lay contentedly in that of her sister, "I should begin to do so now. Love-making after marriage is the best way of reconciling me to love-making before."

“ Well, then,” said Lord Stoketon, looking again at his pretty, blooming wife, “ we have plenty of that, have not we, Sophy ?”

“ Nay, George !” said Sophy. “ Do not expose our folly to Anne, already. I intended to have passed myself off for a dignified, demure, married woman : a sort of mixture of Lady Bountiful, housekeeper, and good wife. But you have just destroyed my plan, George ; a Lady Bountiful, or a good wife never allowed any childish love-making in her life.”

“ Do not fancy you would have succeeded, Sophy,” said Anne, “ if Lord Stoketon had not told tales of you. You must have hid your face, put on a huge cap, and a great-grandmother’s hoop and stiff gown, or some very excellent disguise, or you would never have succeeded.”

“ Well, then, George shall be saved the scolding I intended for him ! But, Anne, you have never admired my house.”

Anne admired it to the full extent of Sophy’s and Lord Stoketon’s wishes. Alford Abbey was a beautiful place ; the house was large, the rooms handsomely furnished, and laying well together, and it had a thoroughly inhabited look. No one ever felt a lurking idea, as they sat in the spacious rooms at Alford, that their size was not quite concomitant with comfort.

The next morning showed Anne how well the beauty outside the house agreed with the favourable impression of the preceding evening’s view of the interior. A handsome conservatory was attached to it. The grounds were very pretty. A flower-garden, filled with the gayest flowers, interspersed with vases and statues, spread its beauty before the windows, extending to a length of shrubbery walks and lawns, and forming, from the windows, a foreground to the fine park beyond ; the park adorned with clumps of beech, and oak, on rising hills, or sheltered dingles, whilst the blue hills peeped forth still farther in the view, bounding the horizon with their undulating line. It was a delightful place, and Anne could praise as much as she wished, without any dereliction from truth.

It was such a happy visit to Anne, that the two months flew quickly by. She had told Sophy everything about herself, and Edward Temple, and George Foley, and Robert Dodson. Everything but what concerned Charlotte and her brother William ; and that, she thought it more advisable to conceal.

She was listened to by Sophy with twice as much interest as she would have been before her marriage. Sophy was certainly improved. Happiness—the devotion of her husband, and her love for him, had certainly improved and softened her. We may talk of the softener of adversity, but domestic happiness is still more efficacious.

As Anne saw the improvement, she discovered that Sophy had perhaps needed it. She never would have thought of it before, or rather, she would never have allowed it till the improvement had actually taken place.

Sophy listened with attention to Anne's relation about Edward Temple. She thought that nothing would be so charming as her marrying him, and was perfectly convinced that he would come to Weston, and make a decided proposal, the moment she returned. She was certain it would all end well, and as a proof, she reminded Anne how well her own affair had ended with Lord Stoketon.

Sophy's powers of reasoning might not be very good, or her reason a very wise one, but she was not the less comforting on that account. She went so far as to advise her to persuade her father to have the marriage in town, instead of at Weston : no wonder that Anne laughed, and smiled, and blushed, and felt a great deal of delight in Sophy's society : no wonder that she should feel a great deal of regret in leaving her, as the last weeks, the last days, the last minutes, and at length the last seconds, flew away and were gone, which remained to her of the visit to Alford.

She quitted it thinking of the mutual happiness of Sophy and her husband ; inclined to look with a favourable view on the advantages of married life, and to wonder whether Temple-court were at all like Alford Abbey, and whether Edward Temple might, or might not, make as good a husband as Lord Stoketon.

As Anne had William for a companion she had less time for these reflections. He had come to Alford to take her back, and had been a week with them there. She had much to say and to hear, and a journey alone with him gave her opportunities of talking and listening which were not to be found at Alford, when she was enjoying to the full, the last moments of Sophy's society.

During Anne's absence a cause for distress had occurred in the family, of which her mother and Charlotte had given some account, and of which she now received farther particulars from William.

This was the death of Charlotte's maid, who after a very short illness had expired in the house. She was a foreigner and a Catholic—consequently not a favourite with the other servants: but she had lived with Charlotte for many years; almost from a child, and was much attached to her mistress.

Charlotte felt her death severely, and its suddenness increased the shock to her feelings. She felt her loss more deeply perhaps than she might otherwise have done; for she was the last link which remained to her of her father's home—the only being whom she had known in childhood, and who had recollections in common with herself, of her father and her home.

But there was besides an added circumstance which increased her distress. The poor woman had eagerly desired that a Catholic priest should be sent for. Her wish was readily and most willingly complied with. Charlotte, in her anxiety, had herself given the orders to the servant. Unluckily she or the servant made some mistake in these orders, and the message never reached the priest till too late. He came, but all was over, and the poor woman had died without the consolation she so ardently desired.

Charlotte bitterly blamed herself for having caused the delay; and it was time alone which could restore her spirits.

William had much to say upon this subject; his thoughts were evidently full of Charlotte; and, in the long day's journey with Anne, the forced *tête-à-tête* was so tempting to confidence, that William found it almost irresistible, and nearly confessed his love. Very nearly, but not quite! A sudden jolt in the carriage—changing horses—or a drunken postboy—something checked him, and Anne expected in vain.

He had begun—he had dropped a few expressions—something which she interpreted as implying his love, and a consciousness of its being returned; but then he stopped—his intention was changed, and he either relapsed into silence, spoke on indifferent matters, or returned to the subject of Sophy and her happiness.

Anne expected, on her return, to hear an avowal from Charlotte; but none was made. Anne saw with sorrow that she looked ill, and that her spirits seemed depressed. When alone with her, she spoke with emotion of the death of her maid, with a feeling that in losing her she had lost the last tie that bound her to her happy child-

hood—to her father's memory. Anne saw it was that tie which affected her so strongly. When we have once known real affliction, the mind becomes sensitive to the touch of every minor sorrow. Widows and orphans have tears to shed, where the happy can see but little cause for grief. The rain-drop, touching the colourless pebble, brings forth the form and colours which had lain hidden in the sunshine : even so, a trifling sorrow recalls the memory of grief lying dormant, but not extinct, in the heart : it bids the forms and images of affliction rise again in all their fresh reality. Had Charlotte Daventry never experienced grief, she perhaps would have been less deeply affected at present : but Anne saw that the feelings of *the orphan* had been touched and revived.

Anne was formed to bestow comfort. She could rejoice with those who rejoiced—no smile so bright—no sympathy so true as hers ; but she could weep with those who wept : none knew so well how to sooth.

No wonder then, that after her return to Weston, when all her fondest care and attention were bestowed in affording comfort to Charlotte Daventry, Charlotte should rapidly recover her spirits, and become ere long gay and animated as ever. It was a pleasant sight to Anne to see her returning to her former cheerful looks, and a pleasant sound to hear her lively, laughing voice once more.

CHAPTER XLIV.

THE families at Weston and at Chatterton often met, and Isabella Foley and Anne Grey at length became friends.

It has been said that we are apt to hate those whom we have injured. With the unamiable this is true, but with the amiable to injure is to love. Such was the case with Isabella : she felt that she had been unjust to Anne, and by way of reparation she began to love her with all her heart. Anne was not a person coldly to receive such a gift, and she loved Isabella in return.

Whether people choose to love or hate one another in a country neighbourhood, or at a watering place, it is equally sure to call forth remark, and to give rise to a whole army of ideas, and whispers, and conjectures, and certainties. We shall see that Miss Foley and Miss Grey could not be friends with impunity.

“Ah! my dear,” said Lady Dowton to Anne, one morning; “it is quite charming to see you with that sweet girl, Isabella Foley. Quite like sisters! nothing can be so fortunate! She is a very nice girl, and I am so delighted to see it so. Quite like *sisters*! that is a pretty little blush, my dear Anne! and when does he come home?”

“Who?” said Anne, with an innocent tone of inquiry.

“Ah! very well. I see you *must* not understand; but when does Mr. George Foley come home?”

“I don’t know,” said Anne, really blushing a little.

“Oh! you are discreet, I see!” said Lady Dowton: “well, it is all very pretty, and very proper; but, my dear love, I am so tired! I am almost afraid that I never can support the fatigue of this visit to the Dashwoods’. I have been sadly suffering this morning; sadly indeed! and so he is not coming back at present? Well, I had hoped—but I must not talk.”

Anne looked uncommunicative: Lady Dowton saw it, and became so tired and languid that Anne thought it time to take leave.

Upon her departure, Lady Dowton sat down to write to her dear friend Miss Lightfoot, and to inform her that Anne Grey’s marriage to George Foley was to be delayed still longer: probably to an indefinite period, owing to Mr. Foley’s objection to his son’s marrying so early; that it was a profound secret, and that George Foley remained abroad on this account.

The next day’s post conveyed this very correct and interesting intelligence to Miss Lightfoot, and the next day it was communicated more agreeably perhaps, *vivâ voce*, to Mrs. and Miss Dashwood, by Lady Dowton herself.

Robert Dodson, indefatigable man, still continued his visits to Weston. Twice refused, and still persevering! Ye bashful, despairing swains, take courage from the example of Mr. Robert Dodson! persevere as he did, and perhaps—nay no doubt—you will be rewarded as he was. If the lady of your affections has a sister, a cousin, or a

friend : lively, good-humoured, and unmarried—do not despair ! Persevere ! and, with Robert Dodson, you will be rewarded at last by finding that your love is transferred from one object to another.

Yes ! Robert Dodson had slipped, slided, or stumbled out of love with Anne Grey, and into love with Charlotte Daventry. Charlotte had been so kind to him—had pitied him so much—was always so good-humoured (so was Anne, but not so lively in her good-humour) that Robert Dodson found it the easiest thing in the world to be in love with her.

Whether either Anne or Charlotte were aware of it, it was impossible to say. Mrs. Grey certainly was not : William Grey certainly was : but then had Robert Dodson not been in love with Charlotte, William would have been just as certain that he was, for he thought every one must be in love with her : but he said nothing, and for a time, at least, Robert Dodson's transferred affection remained a secret at Weston. It was neither whispered nor uttered, nor were its accents caught as they fell, unless Robert Dodson's impressive "Good morning, Miss Daventry. I *hope* I shall see you again before long," as he quitted the room at Weston each day, or each alternate day, might be taken as an indication.

"Lovers' hearts, what pretty things !" said Charlotte Daventry to herself one morning, as she sat alone in the small sitting-room at Weston. Mrs. Grey and Anne were out ; Mr. Grey at a parish meeting, or something equally delightful : and Charlotte Daventry was left alone.

"Pretty baubles," said Charlotte Daventry, smiling to herself, "to be played with—trifled with—sought—won—and thrown aside !" She paused. "Yes, these gay balls," playfully holding up some balls of coloured worsteds which lay by her ; "yes, these shall be my lovers' hearts—appropriate emblems !" smiling as she looked at them : "soft, warm—there the comparison holds ! and here this fiery red one ! this shall personify the flaming, fiery lover : this is Frank Crawford. Here this purple ; this, the more sober, more controllable, yet ardent lover ! my good cousin ! my *almost brother*"—she laughed, "my very dear cousin, William Grey. And here, this dull, unlively brown ! what can this be but my honest, stupid lover, Robert Dodson !

And this bright blue—" she sighed— " yes ! this bright blue— emblem of constancy ! would I could say that this was claimed— that this was an emblem of *his* love ! But no—rather let it be an emblem of mine !"—She paused and sighed ; the tear was in her eye : but it was but for a moment, and, starting from her reverie, she smiled once more. " What ! my lovers' hearts, dangling forgotten ! here whilst they hang at the bar, waiting for a decision ! Here, Frank Crawford, what is your plea ? A ready wit—a cunning heart—a handsome face—a deceiving tongue, that utters bitter things, and merry things, and wise things : a fund of knowledge, sense and talent—all alas ! a little mis-applied ! a love of self, pride, strong passions, ardent love. And this ! is this all, Mr. Crawford ? all you have to say ? Come, my pretty, brilliant ball ! speak once more : or shall I tell you what to say ? shall I speak for you ? You will have a title, fortune, influence, and a name. *These* are your claims ; and I, your judge, will not slight them. No ! they shall be attended to. And you, more sober lover ! what are your claims ? Shall I speak for you, and tell you what you have ? You have a fortune—a devoted heart, but that is nothing, and,—you are a *cousin* ! These are your claims, and I—I will not say they shall not be attended to ! And you, good, dull, and heavy brown, what say you ? Not a word ? No, nothing. But I will speak one word for you in pity ! You are *rich* ! riches may be useful : even your claims shall not be entirely despised. You shall be played with and amused—No more ! He comes ! Lie still, these smiles—lie still, my pretty hearts ! " And William Grey entered the room and found Charlotte Daventry apparently busily engaged with her worsted work.

CHAPTER XLV.

SOPHY Stoketon was not a true prophetess ! Edward Temple did not come and propose to Anne as soon as she returned to Weston.

Anne might, and did feel both disappointment and uneasiness, and yet she could hardly allow herself to acknowledge that she felt either; she knew that circumstances alone could keep him away. She could not doubt his constancy! A woman where she truly loves confides implicitly in the object of her love; and there is a beauty in the undoubting, unsuspecting purity of her affection; a beauty that we would not wish away, even though it exists only to be trampled on, and betrayed.

Anne Grey thus loved! and she would not doubt! but timidity bade her fear, and she anxiously watched each day for tidings of her lover. She anxiously expected the arrival of a letter, to announce his coming; but, alas! none appeared! and when Sophy and her husband arrived at Weston, about a month after Anne had quitted Alford, she had neither seen nor heard anything about him.

Yes! I forgot—she had indeed seen one thing. She had seen his name in the paper! Amongst the list of distinguished visitors staying at the Duke of——’s, enumerated in the Morning Post, and Court Journal, stood one name—one name that she had a strange facility of descrying amongst a hundred others.

“What a pretty blush, my dear Anne!” said Charlotte Daventry to her, after watching her a few minutes in her agreeable task of reading the newspaper. “That pretty blush announces something. I suppose he is dead or married? No—not quite unhappy enough for that; but still not quite pleased! ‘A proposed matrimonial alliance between the daughter of a noble Earl, and the wealthy and fashionable Mr. Temple!’ What! not that, Anne?” as Anne blushed still more deeply, and shook her head. “Well, what is it?” said Charlotte, getting up and looking over her shoulder.

Anne laughed, tried to push Charlotte playfully away, and put her hand over the tell-tale paragraph.

“Ah! thank you, Anne, dear! you have just shown me the place, and now”—taking hold of her hand, and peeping under it, “let me see what it is! Ah, ha! exactly,” said she, with playful exultation, giving Anne a kiss.

“Exactly as I thought! ‘Mr. Temple!’ ‘Distinguished party of fashionables!’ Well, I hope he enjoys his distinguished party of fashionables, and I hope he will come soon, and try what a distinguished party of *un*-fashionables will say to him! Ah! Anne!

never think to deceive me !” said Charlotte, half seriously ; “ I read *Edward Temple* in that face as plain as I could read anything. But, Anne, why did you look so grave ? Why did the sight of his name in that paper make you feel sad ? Do not deny that this is a weakness, Anne ! Why should he not be gay ? why should he not enter into society, and enjoy society—be agreeable and lively as ever ? If he believes that you love him, this should only add to his power of enjoyment. You perhaps feel differently. You feel that *you* could not enjoy anything so much when he is absent. But, Anne, you must remember that this is a woman’s feeling. Men do not resemble us in the steadiness—the absorbing nature of our love. Love is merely a plaything to them ! it is put off and on, and does not affect their whole thoughts and feelings and conduct and happiness, as it does with us. *We* cannot smile and be gay, and seek admiration whilst we are doubtful of the affections of those we love : whilst we are in ignorance whether they are in health and happiness—whether they are not suffering in mind and body ; suffering perhaps from doubts of our constancy ! But, Anne, it is different with men. It is no proof that Mr. Temple is not attached to you because he can be entering into gaiety ; whilst he is uncertain of your constancy, your health, happiness, existence even, (for he may not be quite sure of that certainly)—of which he might assure himself immediately by coming to see you ! But this is no proof that he does not love you, Anne, as much as ever ! No proof that he will not come in due course of time and make his proposals—just as he should do,” said she, playfully turning to her. “ Nay, Anne, grave still ! Still graver than when I first saw you pondering and blushing over that name. Foolish child !”

“ Yes, it is foolish, Charlotte,” said Anne ; “ but I cannot help it :” and she turned away her head to hide the tears that filled her eyes.

Charlotte perceived it, and said, with a softened kindness in her voice and manner, “ My poor Anne ! I did not expect this !” and Anne turned towards her again, and made an effort to overcome the weakness of which she was ashamed.

“ It is foolish indeed, Charlotte,” said she, trying to smile : “ but it is over now. There, you see, I can smile,” as she wiped her tears

away. "And now I will say one word, Charlotte, whilst we are on the subject, and then, no more to-day—no more till—Well, never mind that!" she said, slightly smiling. "But, Charlotte, I must do him the justice to say that, whatever a momentary weakness may cause me to feel, or *look* (as you read my looks), I have not in my heart the least doubt of Mr. Temple's constancy and affection for me. I feel certain that he will return to make me the offer of his hand, whenever circumstances will allow him to do so. If I were not—if I believed that he had forgotten to love me, or had never really loved me, his character would be very different to that I imagine it to be—very different to that which I love and esteem. I should feel that I had been mistaken in loving him, and that he was unworthy of my affection. But I do not imagine such a thing! I cannot! I think too highly of him, not to trust implicitly in his constancy and affection. Now, Charlotte, I have told you what I really think on the subject; so do not watch my looks again. They are nothing! They are, it seems, very silly things! But I believe," she added, smiling, "that love, even a woman's love, Charlotte, is never very wise. There is always a touch of folly about it."

"Well, Anne, your love," said Charlotte, affectionately, "I think is as free from folly as most women's, and I admire your sentiments with regard to Mr. Temple: and now I will not say a word more, for I see that you had rather that I should not: and here is 'Mama Grey!' 'Mama!'—Ah! Anne! If you knew the feeling those words convey to me, when I say them in fun, and feel *not in fun*, that they are not real!—that they do not belong to me—that I have no one to call Mama! No mother, no father, no brother, no sister! Yes, Anne, I can envy you! even if *he* deserts and deceives you! Even then, Anne, I could envy you!" and her voice faltered with emotion as she spoke.

"Dearest Charlotte!" said Anne, with emotion, laying her hand on hers. And now Mrs. Grey was within speaking distance of the cousins, and no more was said either by Anne or Charlotte. They both tried to rouse themselves, and to throw off the feeling of melancholy which had been unconsciously called forth by their conversation.

Sophy and Lord Stoketon came to Weston. Henry was at home, and the whole family were once more collected together. It was a

happy re-union. Still it was not perfect happiness ! Where, indeed, is this to be found on earth ?

If we could look into the hearts of every apparently happy circle of smiling faces, we should, perhaps, be surprised to find in all some secret grief ! To find that, beneath the smiling exterior, there lay concealed in all some sorrows, or cares, which mingled with their happiness and prevented it from being, what to the superficial observer it appeared, what it never is on earth—perfect ! There are smiling faces, and beaming looks, and glad-toned voices ; and there is indeed much of happiness, but it cannot be perfect !

In looking into the hearts of the members of one family, now assembled round the winter's hearth, or now watching the summer sunset, another cause for wonder strikes us. We believe that, having unveiled the secrets of one, we need look no farther : that the heart of each will probably be alike. But, no ! we look again ! Different woes and cares dwell in each ! Even in one small family circle each member, so apparently alike, is yet so different ! Though the same griefs are affecting all, they are felt differently, they touch on different chords. The human heart, we say, and we know, is the same. If we read of sentiments, joys or woes described, we own alike their truth. They are *our* feelings, joys or woes : yet, amongst the multitude of hearts that are beating in the world—that are throbbing with pain, or fluttering with joy, there are not, perhaps, two that are beating alike—whose joys and woes affect them in the same manner. The variations are numberless. Perhaps no two, at any given moment, will beat in every respect to the same emotions : there are likenesses ! but this is all ! there are always some slight exceptions—some differences ! Even with sisters, of almost the same age, where circumstances, education, and situation are alike to each ; yet, look into the hearts of both, and even there we shall see that, however great the similitude of face, manner, and tone, yet in that busy world of feeling lie things unknown and strange to each ; and this, perhaps, without either perceiving that they have a thought or feeling in variance. Yet, so it is, and no less true is it that there ever lurks in human nature some secret woe, some secret alloy. We never can be perfectly happy, though, in those hours of domestic peace, in those family re-unions, in those quiet homes of England, we may more nearly approach the perfec-

tion of earthly bliss than elsewhere. Yet, even here, earth has its sway. Earth breathes on the hearts of all with her cold chill breath, and the summer flowers of joy that would here have gladly bloomed, are touched and withered; their beauty is impaired even in those calm and peaceful English homes.

Must then, the family circle, now again united at Weston, form an exception to this general rule? Oh, no! Mr. and Mrs. Grey, and their family, were by far too common-place to be different to the rest of the world. Even at Weston there was no perfect happiness. All, perhaps, had cares and troubles of their own. Anne Grey was not exempt. The continued absence of Edward Temple was no slight cause of uneasiness to her; and her avowal of perfect confidence in his constancy was fully put to the test, as week after week, he remained absent, and she heard no tidings of him but those the papers brought, where his name was seen amongst the lists of the gay and the fashionable assembled together, 'to partake,' as they said, 'of the hospitalities of some noble duke,' 'distinguished marquis,' or 'hospitable earl!' This, at least, seemed to prove that he was well and happy. She would scarcely allow herself to fancy many evils, or to fear more than once or twice in every day that she would never see him again!

Anne Grey was sensible and calm, but still she could not but feel the absence of her lover for so long a time! He who had left her with the avowal of love but half uttered, with her consent but half accorded. He who had quitted her with the anxiety for meeting again, the pain at parting so visibly expressed in his countenance and manner; he who had asked her to allow him to hope, to allow him to explain when next they met! could he willingly remain in uncertainty for the sake of enjoying the society of strangers, mere acquaintances, perhaps? What lover would so linger? What lover would not fly to obtain an assurance so dear to his wishes, to explain what want of time and opportunity before had left unexplained, and unexpressed within his heart? Oh, no! It could not be! There was some cause to keep him away—something to which he unwillingly and impatiently submitted—he must—he would come! the moment he was at liberty to do so. Anne would not allow herself to doubt: his absence should only cast a slight shade upon her happiness. So she wished! so she resolved! Yet the shade was there, and who can

say that whilst it lingered it should not darken into a deeper gloom?

William's love for Charlotte continued, and so did Charlotte's unconscious encouragement. Anne sighed over it, but 'it could not be helped!' words on the value of which we have elsewhere remarked.

Another cause of uneasiness which existed for Anne will require a little explanation. It will be asked, was Sophy Stoketon's vanity, her selfishness, her love of gaiety, extinct? Did Sophy Stoketon retain no resemblance to Sophy Grey? When Anne saw her at Alford in the quiet of home, loving and beloved by her husband, she thought that any little faults she had ever possessed had been renounced at the altar where she had sworn to love, honour, and obey; or, if they still existed, it was in such an amiable form as scarcely to be reprehensible. Her vanity, if there at all, was only because her husband liked to see her admired; she liked society because George liked it, and appeared in it to such advantage. He was such a general favourite! and it was delightful going out with him, as she saw that he enjoyed it!

This Anne saw at Alford; but at Weston a little *soupçon* of Sophy's less permissible vanity and selfishness threw an additional shade over the happiness of the family re-union. She observed symptoms of uneasiness in Lord Stoketon, slight certainly, but still they existed, as Sophy displayed her love of gaiety, her fondness for admiration. 'To what will this lead in time?' 'Will it lead to domestic happiness and contentment?' were questions quite involuntary, and which Lord Stoketon scarcely allowed himself to ask; but yet they were sometimes asked, and were never satisfactorily answered. Anne asked herself the same questions. She had more time to reply, but she *hoped* instead of replying! There was yet another and a deeper cause of uneasiness to mar the happiness of that happy month of domestic re-union. This was the renewed doubt about Charlotte Daventry. Insanity—mental derangement—madness! these were words which at times rang in Anne's ears, which seemed to haunt her. She could not shake them off—she could not dispel them! but she strove once more to hope.

Hope! blessed boon! gracious gift to the meek and humble mind, to the sad and sinking spirit. Hope whispers, and the sinking heart is glad once more, the sad and tearful eyes again are raised with

bright intelligence. Hope whispers ! But is that whisper of earth ? Is that bright beam of earth or heaven ? Oh ! if of earth how vain and fleeting : why do we listen to its words ? Who that has read these beautiful lines of Bishop Heber's has not felt a wish in his heart that the hope which whispers to himself may be of heaven and not of earth !

Reflected on the Lake, I love
To mark the star of evening glow :
So tranquil in the Heaven above,
So restless in the wave below.

Thus, Heavenly hope is all serene ;
But earthly hope, how bright soe'er,
Still fluctuates o'er this changing scene,
As false and fleeting as 'tis fair.

HEBER.

CHAPTER XLVI.

WHEN Lord and Lady Stoketon returned to Alford, they took Charlotte Daventry with them. After the happiness of a month passed in their society it was melancholy for Anne to be left without either them or her usual companion, Charlotte. However, Henry, her dear boy Henry, was at home ; moreover she thought that Edward Temple would not always be amongst distinguished parties at dukes' houses, and that he might at last come to seek the heart-felt welcome of a simple, yet affectionate being at Weston. This was only expectation ! and, after all, expectation is a poor thing to make oneself happy upon : it was lucky Anne had something better to drive away the sadness of a separation. She had Henry's animated face, his boyish glee, and comfortable chats to cheer her.

She loved Henry with all her heart : she loved him as he loved her, and that was in no trifling, careless way. He was devotedly fond of Anne, and he thought her perfection. She was his own darling

Anne, to whom he told every secret, and who was always ready to listen to him, and to feel for him, and who had, as he said, "such right notions," and "was always so sensible!" Sometimes he thought for a moment that she was wrong—for a day, or a month perhaps, when her opinion went against his wishes; but it always ended in his finding she was right.

One day when he and Anne were sitting alone together, Henry put on a very grave face, "Anne, I have something to tell you," said he, very seriously. "Something I want to talk to you about." Anne was almost frightened; she expected to hear that he had got into some difficulty, in which he required her assistance; but she was soon relieved as he proceeded very gravely; "You know, Anne, that I have often talked to you about your marrying, but I always said that I could not find any one good enough for you. However, at last I have found a person who I think is exactly suited to you. He would be just good enough, and would make you really happy, and I meant to tell you as soon as they were all gone out of the house, and you had time to think about it, that you may consider whether it would not do very well."

Anne smiled, and was going to say something rather in jest, but Henry looked grave; she saw she must be serious; so she tried to compose her features and listened.

"You know, Anne, I have been always looking out for a husband for you: and at last I have found the very person I wanted. I have not seen him myself; but I am told that he is a very fine, handsome-looking fellow: moreover I asked particularly, because I know what you think about that, whether he was very quiet and gentlemanlike in his manners and appearance, and he is remarkably so: and very clever, agreeable and rich. But, after all, that is not the thing. I know better of him than all this: I know a really good trait of him: I know that he is one of the finest, most generous, noble-hearted fellows in all England."

Henry's face glowed with the enthusiasm of his admiration as he spoke. Anne was pleased with the sentiment, and touched by it; but still she had some difficulty to refrain from smiling. However Henry did not perceive it, but went on, whilst Anne was still left in ignorance of the name of his hero—her future husband.

He went on, and with an animated countenance related some

circumstances respecting a steward, and a poor man—a farmer on the estate, who might have been ruined by the roguery of this steward, had not Anne's destined husband interfered, and by his active exertions, his generous interference (and all against his own interest), saved the poor man. He had done it all in such a noble, yet sensible and judicious, way. The whole school had rung with his praises. Henry had listened, he said—had asked, “Is he married?” and received a satisfactory reply—“No! he was unmarried:” and then he settled at once to himself, “This is the very person for Anne.” It was not a single instance of his generosity and good sense; some of the boys at his school lived near his place, and heard him praised, and knew that he was so much beloved and respected.

Henry stopped, and then, looking at Anne, when he had related all these circumstances, said to her, “Well, Anne, is not he a fine fellow?”

“Yes, indeed,” said Anne, “he seems to be a very perfect character;” and she was in truth only saying what she thought.

“Aye, Anne, I knew you would say so!”

“And now, Henry, I want to know his name?”

“Oh! his name! yes, I forgot—but Anne, do not you think it will do? He comes into this neighbourhood I hear, sometimes, so you will be able to see him. Perhaps you *have* seen him by the way? His name is Temple—Edward Temple, of Temple-court.”

“Mr. Temple!” said Anne, starting, and turning away her face to conceal the pleasure which she guessed was too evidently painted there. It was so singular, so delightful to have heard such a trait, such praises of him—to discover, when she only expected to be amused by Henry's boyish scheme, that the hero of his imagination was the very person whom she loved.

She tried to compose her features to a proper degree of pleasure, and then said, “I know Mr. Temple, Henry!”

“You know him!” said Henry, with a joyful look. “You know him! Well, and, Anne?” in a tone of animated inquiry, expecting Anne to tell him that she should be delighted to marry him.

“Well, Henry,” said Anne, blushing and looking down to conceal her blush, “I think you have done him justice: that is, I

think—I should think he was equal to the opinion you have formed of him.”

“ You should think ! you think ! but, Anne, are you not sure ? ” said Henry, eagerly taking hold of her hand, and looking her full in the face. Anne could not stand the inquiring scrutiny of this look, for she knew that there was a certain consciousness depicted in her face ; she determined to attempt no farther concealment, and she made Henry—her own dear boy Henry quite happy—quite in dancing delight, with telling him that she loved Edward Temple, and that she believed Edward Temple loved her. She ended by begging him to be discreet.

“ Discreet ! Aye, Anne, ” said Henry, proudly. “ When did you ever know me fail in discretion ? I am to be trusted, Anne. You may tell me every secret of your heart, and you need not fear that I shall blab ; ” and Henry then returned to his delight, his surprise, and his wonder when Mr. Temple would come ; and why he did not come ; and to ask Anne over and over again for a description of him—his looks—his conversation—whether he rode well—whether he had ever called her ‘ Anne, ’ by mistake, instead of ‘ Miss Grey ? ’ and Henry looked a little disappointed, and doubtful for a moment, when he found he never had. But it did not matter ! It was certain he was a fine fellow, and very fond of Anne, and that she was very tolerably fond of him, and how he should like him for a brother ! Henry had also more serious feelings to express. There was mingled so much right-mindedness and goodness of heart with his boyish view of things, that Anne was delighted with him.

His impatience was the only thing with which she had to find fault. His excessive impatience for Edward Temple’s proposal made Anne find that her own impatience could not be kept in such steady discipline, whilst she had to curb that of Henry ; nor to help being vexed that he did not come, when she heard Henry’s wonder and vexation expressed most ardently every day. Still, it was very agreeable to have to talk to him on the subject, and the three weeks of Charlotte Daventry’s absence passed less slowly than they would otherwise have done.

Charlotte returned ; and how had the time passed with her ? Of course just as all time spent from home sounds in relation, when it becomes a thing of the past.

“ Oh, it had been so happy ! ” was Charlotte’s answer. “ If you had only been there, Anne ! I wanted you every day. We had a great deal of gaiety and visiting. ”

“ And Sophy ? ” —

“ She is so well and in such spirits—and she is so much admired, ” added Charlotte, in rather a different tone, but it was soon exchanged again for one more animated. “ She is the reigning belle of the county, and receives her homage very prettily. ”

“ And Lord Stoketon ? ” —

“ Oh ! Lord Stoketon, he is so much beloved—Yes, that is the word for him. Every one loves him. How happy Sophy ought to be ! ”

“ Yes, she is happy indeed ! ” said Anne, with some little emotion, and a sigh.

“ She is very fond of gaiety, ” said Charlotte. Anne looked inquiringly at her, but there was nothing in her manner that betokened any peculiar meaning. Anne was satisfied.

CHAPTER XLVII.

MAN is notoriously a social animal : as if to prove it, we spend the greater part of our lives in seeing one another, hating one another, and envying one another. If this is not the proof, it is at least the consequence of our sociability.

There was a great deal of visiting, receiving of visitors, and what is politely styled gaiety, going on whilst Charlotte remained with the Stoketons. Sophy Stoketon, with the rest of the world, enjoyed gaiety (commonly so called) with all her heart. She enjoyed and sought it perhaps a little too much ; for it was more than her husband wished.

But then, as Charlotte Daventry said to her as they sat working together in the morning, “ My dear Sophy, you are so pretty and so nice, and Lord Stoketon loves so much to see you admired, that you ought not to be shut up at home with no one but ‘ Mrs. Gibson,

ma'am?' or 'Mr. Larkin, *me* Lady' to see you;" and Charlotte gave an admirable imitation of the said Mrs. Gibson and Mr. Larkin, which made Sophy laugh.

"If you had not been such a good mimic, I would not have agreed with you," said she. "Will you do it once more: or keep it for George this evening?"

"With all my heart, if he will not wish to give you a full dose of Mrs. Gibson *proper*. If he will be satisfied with Mrs. Gibson *sham*, I will do anything in the world for him. But seriously, Sophy, I could not like him if he were the sort of husband to keep you always at home. A domestic-felicity man, who never enjoyed any domestic felicity in his life! or if he did, singly, for I am sure he never would allow any one else to enjoy it!"

Sophy laughed, and Sophy sighed.

"George likes me to go into society," she said, in a gentle voice.

"Yes," said Charlotte, "Oh yes!" after a little pause, as if she remembered that her *yes* had not been sufficiently assenting. "Oh yes! Sophy."

"By the bye," she added, in a different tone, and after a few minutes' pause, "how odd it was when you spoke of Captain Herbert before you married, that you never told me that he was good-looking!"

"Good-looking! did not I?" said Sophy. "But I am not sure now?"

"Oh! Sophy!" interposed Charlotte. "He is one of the handsomest people I ever saw: but then I have an interest in him, poor man!"

"Poor man?" said Sophy, "and why poor man?"

"For shame, Sophy! how cruel to ask;—but I forgot! you probably do not see what I cannot help perceiving. With all his gaiety and assumed carelessness, is there not a sigh for a lady he once loved? Is there not a hidden pang for a lady he once loved and *lost*? For a lady who laughs and *forgets*? Sophy, what do you say to that?" said Charlotte, half seriously, half jestingly, turning her eyes full on Sophy with a look of inquiry.

"My dear Charlotte," said Sophy, averting her face, but just laughing a little, "how can you fancy anything so absurd?"

"Absurd!" said Charlotte. "Well I suppose it is right for you

to think so. 'They laugh who win!' but, you must allow me to think for myself. *I* may be sorry; I *must* indeed, when I look at my Lady Stoketon here!" turning and playfully fixing her eyes upon Sophy. "Let me look! Is this a form to be forgotten? Is this a face to be looked at with impunity? to be loved once and then—nay, nay my dear Lady Stoketon, do not veil your beauties from my sight—do not hide the idol from its worshipper, before your graces are half told!" Charlotte laughingly continued, as Sophy interrupted her by placing her hands before her eyes. "I should have raised you to the skies if you had not closed my vision at once, Sophy, you tyrant. But as you will not let me finish apostrophizing, we will leave it to Captain Herbert to do the rest; and he will do it from his heart! and you—One thing however, Sophy," said Charlotte, dropping her mock heroic tone, and speaking seriously, almost with emotion—"You are perfect. You have not an atom of vanity, or you would be flattered by having inspired such a sentiment in the heart of a man like Captain Herbert!"

Sophy did not speak: there was a moment's silence, and then Charlotte, with a lively air, as if she had forgotten the subject on which they had been talking, or wished to have no more of it, walked away, and, opening the window which led into the garden, was soon amongst the flowers, leaving Sophy to reflect alone.

Whether her reflections were pleasing or not, I cannot say: whether they called forth a smile, or a sigh? but Charlotte Daventry, as she stooped over a cluster of blooming flowers, had a smile of triumph in her eyes.

"My lady bright!" fell softly from her lips. "As lovely and as frail as these. Your fates are alike! But a light wind blows, you are bowed to the earth, and your sweetness and beauty are then but a dream. Frail flower! frail lady! Flutter and dance alike in the breeze, and the sun, and the summer air! Gay flowers! gay lady, bloom awhile!"

"How pretty my cousin, Lady Stoketon, is!" said Charlotte Daventry to Captain Herbert, as she was dancing with him at a race ball. "Certainly she is very lovely!" exclaimed she, as she looked towards the place where Sophy was sitting. "But I suppose," she added, laughing, "it is against etiquette to praise one's cousin."

"Oh no! I think not," said Captain Herbert. "Or, at any rate,

Miss Daventry may do what she pleases; only you must allow me to say in return, How lovely Lady Stoketon's cousin is," slightly bowing to her, with an air as much as to say, You ought to be flattered at receiving even such a compliment from me.

"You have not yet found out that I hate compliments," said Charlotte, laughing, "and you have not yet answered my question, or rather my remark. I said, How lovely Lady Stoketon is!"

"How shall I excuse myself," said Captain Herbert, carelessly, "both for paying a compliment, and not paying one? But I forgot. Lady Stoketon is very pretty;" and Captain Herbert said so as if he thought that even this was the praise which civility demanded.

"I thought you had been a great friend, consequently a great admirer, of my cousin?" said Charlotte, inquiringly, and with a little surprise. "Sophy so often speaks of you!"

Captain Herbert gave a little start; what man would not have been flattered?

"I am flattered!" said he, but he said so, as if he wished to imply that he did not care whether Lady Stoketon, beautiful, captivating, and agreeable as she was, thought or spoke about him or not. "I am flattered," said he, and he glanced at himself in a mirror, probably for the pleasure of convincing himself that it was easier for the attention of a man like him to flatter, than to be flattered by the thoughts or admiration of any man or woman in the world.

"She said the other day she thought you had forgotten her," said Charlotte, "and that you must have mistaken her for some other person."

"Did she?" said Captain Herbert, whilst a smile curled on his lip that seemed to betoken that he was not quite indifferent to the interest felt for him by a very pretty woman. "I am quite shocked—quite grieved! I must have been unpardonably rude, I am afraid;" and his eye glanced towards the place where Sophy was sitting, smiling, laughing, and talking to a circle of men surrounding her, who were too idle, or too well occupied, to dance. Charlotte saw his glance.

"Do look at my cousin now," said she, "how very pretty she looks at this moment!"

"She is very lovely!" said Captain Herbert.

"She is such a dear creature!" continued Charlotte, who

seemed fully bent on praising her cousin that evening. "How young she looks to be a chaperon!"

"She is very young and very beautiful!" said Captain Herbert, and he sighed.

"And it is that which makes you speak so gravely, I suppose?" said Charlotte, laughing, "Are you envious of her gaiety, beauty, or happiness, Captain Herbert?"

"Of all three, if they take away so much of your attention whilst I am dancing with you," was his reply. "You do not allow me the privilege of being serious then, Miss Daventry?" added he, shortly after.

"Certainly not, when you are speaking of the perfections of my cousin."

"At other times then?" said he.

"If you please," said Charlotte, "you may sigh all day—groan—shed tears if you will—look grave and moralize—only not when you are dancing with me, or speaking of Sophy Stoketon. She said of you, by the bye, that she did not suppose you were troubled with much sensibility. I remember her saying it, so do not exclaim against it. It was Sophy told me so, and I must believe that she knows your character. She said, moreover, that she thought you could soon forget old friends—that you loved variety. There; you see that your real character has been displayed to me, and that I am at liberty to quarrel with your being serious, because I know that it is not natural to you."

Captain Herbert ought to have been flattered still more with Sophy than with Charlotte Daventry at that moment, and his eyes certainly did wander to the corner of the room where she was seated.

The music ceased. Charlotte was taken to her chaperon. That chaperon was Lady Stoketon. Captain Herbert lingered for a little time near her, as Sophy was busy talking. She was too much occupied to look towards Charlotte and her partner, and he withdrew, with a slight accession of pride apparent in his parting bow, as he relinquished Charlotte to the care of the young and lovely Lady Stoketon, who could not find time even to remark his presence.

"A little pique," thought Charlotte, as she seated herself; "a little flattered vanity! My gallant Captain and my pretty bride, beware! Take good care of yourselves!—Take care, if you can!"

CHAPTER XLVIII.

CHARLOTTE had the art of winning confidence, and she had more secrets confided to her than were ever before confided to any living being.

Will it be wondered then, that Lord Stoketon should make a confidante of her, even though he had not the slightest idea, for some time, that he had any confidences to make? yet, strange to say, he had once dropped a hint to Charlotte that he wished Sophy was not quite so fond of gaiety: he never thought of making a confidence when he said so, and yet it ended in nothing less, and he spoke to Charlotte of his fears that Sophy was too fond of society and admiration. Till he began to talk of it, he was not quite certain whether he wished it otherwise; but when he had opened his heart to her, nothing was so certain as that he felt a great deal of uneasiness, and that he had very great cause to do so; that, in short, he had not felt half so much as he might have done, and that it was not easy to be sufficiently unhappy on the occasion. It was fortunate, he thought, that he had such a sensible, kind-hearted girl, as Charlotte to advise with. What will be said, when we venture to disagree with Lord Stoketon? when we venture to say, that it had been fortunate for him, had he been deprived of such a kind and judicious counsellor?

Charlotte Daventry left Alford in three weeks from her first arrival there. A shade had passed over the unalloyed happiness Anne had looked on with delight but a few months back. Did time dispel the shade? No, it deepened—it was settled there!

Charlotte Daventry returned to Weston. She had found happiness: she left a blight: and she returned to Weston, gay and smiling as ever, and was warmly, fondly welcomed by Anne Grey.

“How pretty this bright sun makes everything look!” said Anne, to Charlotte, one day as the sun shone in gaily at the drawing-room

window at Weston, lighting up the landscape without, and animating with its cheerful gleams the room within.

“After all, Charlotte! there is nothing like home. There is no happiness—no perfect happiness like that which home gives!”

Anne’s countenance reflected her expression. There was a contented smile on her lips; a bright yet quiet gladness in her eyes as she spoke.

“And after all what?” said Charlotte, smiling. “I must know of what that *éloge* on home is apropos?”

“Apropos then,” said Anne, “to our going to Dashwood next week. If I had my own way, I never would stir from home again;—provided I could keep you all happy and contented around me,” added she. “Who would ever leave the enjoyment of home? the quiet, peaceful feel—the happiness of retiring to bed each night trusting that one has passed the day innocently and profitably! the happiness of waking each morning to a sense of duties, easy and pleasant to be performed, where one is sure of affection to reward and look kindly on every slight failing in their performance! To know that one can add cheerfulness and comfort to those one loves! Oh! surely, home is a happy place! who would ever wish to leave it?” and Anne turned her eyes, beaming with grateful happiness, to the placid scene from the window brightly touched with the rays of the setting sun.

Charlotte was silent for a few minutes. She was stooping over her embroidery frame, and her face was concealed as she bent over it.

“Yes,” she said, at length, “you are an enthusiast, we all know, about home. I really am very fond of it, but I cannot say that I dislike a sight of the beau-monde too!”

In the evening the family were all assembled; some working, some drawing, some reading; Henry making a fishing net, with Anne’s assistance out of hard-knot-difficulties, and long stitches.

There had been a little music; harp, piano, and singing—the merry catch of “Three blind mice,” in which William and Henry both joined. Then a new book had just arrived, and Mr. Grey was asked to read some of it aloud, and, like a good father, he consented; and how delightfully the work and drawing proceeded as he read!

Could any one have looked in on that happy family party, they might have said, No wonder that such a word as ‘comfortable’ was needed and invented by the English! What but ‘comfortable’ could express what is here before us? With no excitement! no alluring gaiety! no ‘spectacle!’ no vanity to be flattered! no well-studied graces to be displayed! It is peace and happiness, serene, and still as the fair unclouded brow of that gentle being, Anne Grey! She, who made the charm of home—who was formed to smile away displeasure—to bear reproof, to bear it herself instead of others—to be unrepining—to chase away care by cheerful looks, and cheerful words, to be pleased when others were, to laugh when others laughed—to weep when others wept!

“Well, Charlotte,” said Anne, as with a happy kiss she wished her good-night; “do not you think with me, that there is ‘No place like home!’ as the hand organs have assured us for a few years past?”

“Yes, I do, and good-night, *mia carina!*”

“Happy! yes,” said Charlotte Daventry, as she stood musing in her room after Anne had closed the door. “Yes, she has griefs and cares, yet she is contented and unrepining! she is happy in conscious goodness—unspotted—sinless in thought. Happy, happy, being! And I!” she exclaimed with vehemence, “I, what am I? what have happiness and Charlotte Daventry to do with one another? Oh! father! father!” and she threw herself upon the bed in mental agony; “Why leave this bitter curse upon your child? Why glare upon me thus?—always there! Oh, leave me—leave me!” she writhed in anguish—“leave me but one moment’s peace! I would have wept upon her neck! I would have turned—fallen at her feet—said, Spurn, despise, condemn me—I would have crouched and sued for pity—for forgiveness—all—all, to have deserved one heart-felt smile like hers! That smile! did it not pierce my heart? Oh, God! I renounce it all! I will no more: I will turn, and repent, and renounce the task—the odious toil!

“But, ah! Oh, God! Hide me—hide me!” She started wildly forward, stared in horror for a moment, then, covering her face with both her hands, she exclaimed, with frantic energy, half screaming in her agony: “Oh, God! t’was he! That face—father, had I forgotten? had I renounced? Oh, no, no!” she added, with

increasing vehemence. "Oh, no! Forgive! forgive!" She started forward, threw her arms on high, stood erect and firm: her eyes flashing with energetic resolve, looking fixedly on vacancy as if she beheld there a being she would address. "Father!" she uttered, whilst still she stood, her head bent forward and her arms extended, "Father! do not glare on me thus! I swear to persevere—to finish the work! I swear that love, nor pity, nor womanly fear, nor *womanly love*"—there was a thrilling energy as she pronounced those words—"nor remorse, shall turn me from my path. Father, I swear! your child had but for a moment forgotten!" and her attitude of determination and of energy was gone: the wild flashing of her eyes was over, her hands were folded gently on her bosom.

"Yes! but for one moment. What?" she smiled; (oh, the horror of such a smile!) "What, did Charlotte Daventry think she had to do with happiness, with innocence? what strange mistake!" she smiled more bitterly again. "No, it was a momentary delusion. It is gone. Dear, happy home! Yes! that is for her, *that* was never meant for me. No! mine is hate, revenge, triumph,—and"—she shuddered,—"*despair!*"

CHAPTER XLIX.

"MISS FOLEY has been here, Anne," said Mrs. Grey, one morning, "and they want us all to go to Chatterton. They have some friends coming to them."

"Mr. Temple, perhaps," thought Anne. She actually laid down her work to listen.

"A very pleasant party it seems," said Mrs. Grey. "There are to be——;" but, alas! she interrupted herself. "What *can* I have done with my scissors? Anne, are you sure you have not got them, by mistake? I am sure I had them a moment ago;" and Mrs. Grey got up—looked on the floor—turned over all the work on the

table, and all the books, and all the things where they were least likely, and to tell the truth, impossible, to be; would not listen to Anne's delicate hint that they might be in her work-bag.

“Impossible!”

Anne looked, and looked, and to do her justice, partly for the sake of her mother's work, as well as for her own unsatisfied curiosity as to *the who* were to be met at Chatterton.

“Why! I declare! how very strange!” exclaimed Mrs. Grey, after the animated search on tables, chairs, sofas, and floor, and under Anne's work, and under her drawing, had lasted for some time, Anne's curiosity increasing every moment to know whether Mr. Temple might not, very probably, be named amongst Chatterton guests.

“Why! I declare! how strange,” said Mrs. Grey, “here they are at last!” and the scissors, true enough, were found in the natural place—in the work-bag, after all the ingenuity expended by Mrs. Grey in supposing them possibly in impossible places.

And then when she was seated again scissors in hand, she had time to think of what she had been saying.

“What was it I was talking of, Anne? Let me see, what was it I was saying? Oh! I remember, about our going to Chatterton. Well, my dear, your father says we must certainly go. The Hadleys are to be there, and the Astons—only think, Anne, the Astons! Never seen them for six—no for seven—let me see! I don't know whether it is not eight years—eight years next March! Oh! and Mr. Temple is to be there.”

Anne's heart beat twice as quick as usual, her eyes sparkled.

“What's in a name?” people say. I say, a great deal! Anne could have given her mother a kiss at that moment for nothing more or less than a name!

She contented herself with a joyous bound out of the room, saying, “I must go and tell Charlotte!”

Mrs. Grey looked after her for a moment in surprise: work and long-lost scissors actually fell from her hands as she closed the door!

“Why, what's the matter?” thought she. “If it had been Charlotte or Sophy! Well! I am glad she is learning to enjoy it so much!” and Mrs. Grey settled more comfortably than ever to her tent-stitch.

“Charlotte! he is to be there! we are to meet him!” said Anne, half out of breath, as she shut the door of the room in which Charlotte was occupied in writing.

“He is to be there! and we are to meet him! Well, Anne,” said Charlotte, smiling, “that is clear and comprehensive! I wish you joy, my dear little, quiet, composed, Anne. If that had been me, what a wise reproving look I might have earned!”

“Charlotte!” said Anne, in a deprecating tone, laughing and blushing.

“And, Anne!” rejoined Charlotte. “Come! do not let us play at cross questions, or sing different words to the same tune. Let us both exclaim in grand chorus, ‘Mr. Temple!’ Yes! I know! but now for a little clearer view of the case. You said, ‘*He* is to be there!’ the *he* wants no explanation, for *he* read Mr. Temple. In the lingua, Anne Grey, we turn the pages of the dictionary, ‘Letter H. He,’ meaning ‘Edward Temple.’ That is clear enough. But *there!* that is doubtful! so I must say, ‘Where?’”

Anne explained.

“Now, Anne, though I laugh at you a little,” said Charlotte, “you see I can laugh *with* you too, and I never was so pleased with any news in my life, because I am sure to what it will lead directly: a pleasing event! Am I to be bride’s-maid?”

“For shame, Charlotte!” but Anne was so happy, that she did not much mind being laughed at. She bore it like a stoic, but she was grave for a moment.

“Suppose, after all, that he should not care about me? suppose that he should be changed?” was the cause, or the result of the moment’s gravity, and she stopped and looked serious.

“Suppose, my dear Anne,” said Charlotte, in an equally grave voice, whilst Anne looked anxiously at her, “suppose that this house is not Weston after all!”

“Charlotte!” said Anne, smiling once more.

“What! are we to begin our duet again?” said Charlotte, and she laughed. “Come, Anne, you must not be foolish and fanciful! You see it will not do. Go and be happy as you ought, and do not mar your happiness by doubts, and fears, and nonsense. Even I am forced to lecture you. Charlotte Daventry lecturing Anne Grey!”

“ I wish you were not going away to-morrow, ” said Anne, perhaps because she wished to be lectured, which was certainly very amiable.

However our wishes, amiable though they may be, or appear to be, are not always gratified ; and on the next day Charlotte Daventry went for a few days on a visit to some connexions of her father’s, Lady Harriet and Mr. Bingley.

Charlotte had lived in such strict seclusion with her father that, at the time she came to Weston, there was hardly a person whom she knew ; and the Bingleys had been almost entire strangers to her. They had however met her lately, and claimed the connexion and acquaintance. She was now going to visit them for a few days at their place, about twenty miles from Weston, and it was this engagement which interfered with Anne Grey’s wish for daily conversation with her, on the subject of a visit to Chatterton.

Charlotte went, and whether Anne shed tears or not at her departure I cannot say ! All who think that she ought to have done so may suppose that she did ; all who think that tears were not called for, may believe that with stoical indifference she uttered ‘ Good bye, ’ with no more sorrow in the tone than lingers around the school-boy’s farewell to his school-master, when holiday time releases school-boy and school-master alike, from the burthen of each other’s society !

Soon after Charlotte’s departure, Isabella Foley called, and her opinion on the subject was audibly expressed in her entering speech. “ I thought you would be so lonely without Miss Daventry, that I came to see you. ”

Even the fragments of a broken vase are sometimes worth preserving, and even so may the fragments of a conversation be sometimes worth recording.

“ I forgot to tell you, ” said Isabella, “ what, after all, my heart is full of ! my brother is coming home in about a week ! Do not you congratulate me ? ” said she, her eyes sparkling with pleasure.

“ Yes, indeed ! ” said Anne, feeling at the same time a little unpleasant sensation, which she thought it quite unnecessary to show.

“ Oh ! how I wish, Miss Grey, ” said Isabella ; but she checked herself, and only cast an appealing look at Anne.

Anne could not misinterpret the look, and the words.

“ I know what you wish, I believe, ” said Anne, blushing ; “ but it cannot be, ” she added, more firmly.

“ Are you so very sure, dear Miss Grey ? ” said Isabella. “ Will not time—may it not?—Oh ! how happy dear George might be, and how happy it would make me if you could only—”

“ No, no, ” said Anne, interrupting her. “ You know how much I esteem your brother : how much gratitude I feel for his favourable opinion—but it never can be any other feeling, dear Miss Foley ; and indeed, ” she added, smiling, “ you are supposing what may not be the case. Absence may have altered his feelings, and I cannot help hoping that it has. He may no longer desire that which he did when he left England. ”

“ No, that is not the case, ” said Isabella, rather sorrowfully. “ He mentions you always ! and in his last letter he tells me he is not changed. ”

Anne blushed, sighed, and looked sorry. It was an unfeigned sorrow—an uncoquettish blush and sigh. She wished for George Foley’s friendship, but she did not wish for his love, for she could not return it. Though there is something flattering and soothing to the feelings of most young ladies, in the idea of having a poor lover constantly sighing and sorrowing, for the sake of their ‘ beaux yeux,’ Anne Grey was insensible enough not to experience this pleasure.

The next day and again the next were spent by Anne in happy anticipation of what the following week would bring. She should certainly see Edward Temple : of that there could be no doubt, and changed !—oh no ! he could not be changed ! What a weak contemptible character that would suppose him to be : it was most uncharitable ! Anne Grey’s benevolent heart could not allow it. It was doing him the greatest injustice to entertain a doubt ! he certainly would be the same ! and perhaps—her heart beat quick at the thought, “ perhaps in a few more days ”—the barking of Charlotte’s favourite spaniel at that moment interrupted her train of thought.

It is a sad thing, what trifles can dispel the brightest visions—demolish the most beautiful castles in the air. But for this little spaniel—Sir Isaac Newton’s was nothing to it—Anne might in a few more minutes have placed herself in the presence of Mr. Temple, have listened with glowing happiness to the avowal of his love.

But Fido dispelled the pleasing vision, and she returned to the

house, watching its gambols, and thinking whether a black or a brown dog were the prettiest; or an Italian greyhound much to be preferred to a spaniel. Certainly for placing in a sketch!

“Letters! any for me, mama?” said Anne.

“Yes, one, my dear, from Charlotte, I think.”

“I am glad of that!” and Anne took the letter to her room.

“She is a dear girl to have written!” thought she.

CHAPTER L.

WHEN Anne had taken off her bonnet and shawl, she opened her letter with a comfortable feeling of pleasure, which those not accustomed to the receipt of letters on business may perhaps understand.

She broke the seal—glanced down the page—turned to the beginning, whilst her colour might have been observed to mount to her cheeks, and even spread to her temples.

“I am going to give you pain, dearest Anne,” were the first words.

Anne had already seen Mr. Temple’s name in the long and closely written letter. She saw that Charlotte had met him. Her hand shook so violently, she could scarcely hold the letter, and for a time her eagerness to know what Charlotte had to communicate was useless. Her eyes swam so that she could not read a syllable.

A few minutes brought some degree of composure. She sat down and began to read:—

“I am going to give you pain, dearest Anne,” it said: “and
“I need not speak of my own distress in being obliged to do so.
“It is my duty. It would be of no use, and I feel it would be
“wrong, to conceal from you the truth, painful as it must be. I
“trust to your firmness—your good sense, my poor dear Anne, to
“support you. You will exert your fortitude and energy of cha-
“racter now that I fear—alas! I *know* that they will be needed.

“ You require no assurances of sympathy and affection from me.
“ You know that they are yours, nor will you doubt that at this
“ moment I am longing to be with you. Yet, it is better that I
“ should relate by letter what I would sooner have pierced myself
“ to the heart than have to tell.”

But we will give in our own words the purport of Charlotte Davenport's letter. The intelligence, which at one hasty glance, Anne saw that it contained was this—Edward Temple had deceived her—Edward Temple was unworthy of her.

This was the purport of the letter, and the facts spoke too clearly to admit a doubt of its truth. He was staying at the Bingleys'. They knew him well. They had seen much of him both in town and in the country, and were better able to judge of his character than those who had seen him in the country, and in one particular circle alone, where he might, for his own purposes, and in the absence of temptation, play the amiable, quiet, right-minded man.

Charlotte had talked a good deal to the Miss Bingleys about him. She had been anxious for information on Anne's account : what she had heard, however distressing to learn, she was still thankful to have become acquainted with now, rather than later ; for the sooner Anne's delusion was dispelled the better for her peace, her happiness, her prospects in life ! When Charlotte found that the Bingleys knew Mr. Temple well (which she would certainly hardly have supposed from their manner towards him), she felt anxious to hear their opinion of his character, and, without exciting suspicion, she sought for information regarding him : the result was as follows. Charlotte had begun, as was most natural, by praising him—his agreeableness, his cleverness were discussed, and they perfectly agreed. So unlike other men of the world, who are apt to be spoiled—to become cold, selfish, and heartless, was next ventured on by Charlotte. But here the Miss Bingleys did not so perfectly agree with her. Yes, certainly—men of the world were apt to be so ; yes, Mr. Temple was a man of the world. They allowed this very readily, but they seemed unconscious of his claims to the flattering distinction between him and others.

In short, by following up the conversation, Charlotte extracted a great deal of information, which was most painful and distressing to her to hear. Edward Temple was not a marrying man (*that*

Anne had once heard before from Lady Hadley. Oh! would she had remembered it better! would she had never allowed herself to be blinded!).

“Mr. Temple is certainly not a man ever to think of marrying,” said Miss Bingley, “and that I suppose is the palliation he makes to himself for conduct which would otherwise be so inexcusable. He believes, perhaps, or affects to believe, that all the world are acquainted with this fact.”

“He has behaved so ill in one or two instances,” said Jane Bingley, “that in charity we must suppose he makes some excuse to himself. We happen to know a great deal about him—unhappily,” continued she, “for one of those to whom he devoted himself was a relation of ours. Hers was a melancholy history,” she added, “and I fear but a common one, if there are really many such characters as Mr. Temple in the world. He met her in the country; paid her every attention; was always coming into the neighbourhood where her father resided; and assumed the most amiable feelings, to win the heart of this pretty, unsophisticated girl. He succeeded. He won her affections, and never sought to meet her again. All invitations into the neighbourhood, before so eagerly sought, now were useless. Her happiness was gone: but that did not signify! his vanity was satisfied, and he thought no more of her. Poor girl!” said Jane Bingley, with a sigh. “She was an amiable creature; gentle, affectionate, and good! Her heart was broken. A year after his desertion, she died!”

Jane Bingley paused in emotion. The recollection of her cousin affected her strongly, even at this distance of time.

“It is now two years since her death,” she continued, “and we have seen but little of Mr. Temple since: we *wished* to see but little, but my father has just kept up the forms of civility. This is almost the first time he has been in the house since then: but we have often heard of him, and seen him, as we could not fail of doing in London, when we met at the same parties, night after night: we saw him, this very Spring, devoting himself, as we had seen him before. It was to a young, inexperienced girl; fresh from the school-room: pretty, diffident, and retiring. Miss Greville was exactly the person for his attentions, and he paid them assiduously: sometimes, as I was seated near them at a party, and I could

not avoid overhearing some of his conversation, I longed to give her a warning. I saw that her heart was won—her tone, her look, her confusion all told that tale. I thought of my poor cousin, and it made me sigh for this poor girl. Before the season was over, he was attracted by some new face, and he deserted her. Every one remarked how ill Miss Greville looked. I heard her friends were uneasy about her—they thought that hot rooms and late hours had been too much for her, and she was taken away to try the effect of country air—little use for a broken heart! She left London, how changed to what she had been—to what she had entered it but a few weeks before! I cannot forget her colourless face, and mournful countenance, as I watched her sometimes when she had seen him devoting himself to her rival. No,” she added, after a pause, “Mr. Temple is a man whom, admired, flattered, courted as he is, I could never look on but with abhorrence. He may be envied, and he is; but, with all his advantages, I could never envy a man whose real character every amiable and sensible person must despise in their hearts.”

This conversation Charlotte repeated, and more still was related to pierce Anne to the heart. She told her that Mr. Temple had asked after her with something like an assumption of interest, but with evident unconcern. She said that she believed her indignation was betrayed in her countenance at the moment, and she fancied he perceived it, for he immediately exerted himself to amuse her. He studiously put forth all his powers of conversation, with the intention, no doubt, of fascinating her imagination against her better judgment.

“But my eyes were opened,” continued Charlotte. “Would
“to heaven, dearest Anne, that you had been warned before! I
“can hardly bear to think of your feelings. I long to be with
“you, to try to comfort you! and yet perhaps, for a little time, to
“be alone will be best for you. It is with this idea I write; but,
“the morning after you receive this letter I shall be at Weston.
“I can scarcely endure the sight of this man—this person whom
“I admired so much—Dearest Anne! how I reproach myself for
“having encouraged your love for him! May heaven help, support, and comfort you, my poor Anne!”

The letter was read through. Every word was read. Anne

shed no tear. She had never moved during the time she perused it. Her eagerness to know the whole kept all emotion still : but, when the last word had been read—when she had no more to know, no more to hope—no mitigation to receive, the cause of her calmness was removed. Her emotions overpowered her. Her head fell forwards ; all power, feeling, sense were gone, and she fainted.

If any have swooned under the shock of a sudden and painful communication, they will understand the misery which attends the return to feeling and memory. Anne Grey returned to consciousness. Something dreadful had happened : she put her hand to her forehead, “ Yes ! or it is a dream ? I thought ”—and her eyes fell on the letter which had dropped to the ground, and then all returned. She knew it was no dream.

Her senses nearly forsook her a second time as the truth again rushed upon her mind. “ I know it now,” she said. “ Oh ! why have I no tears ! it cannot be true, or I should have wept—surely I should have wept ! ” but the recollection of the reality forced itself fully upon her mind, and, after awhile, Anne leant her head on the table, and sobbed without control.

She was roused by hearing Henry’s step along the passage. In a few minutes he gave his usual brisk, and noisy knock at the door, and in his lively, joyous tone called out, “ Anne ! Anne ! may I come in ? ”

Anne started, and as she raised her head she shuddered. It was happiness and misery that came in contact, they clashed, and she shuddered.

“ I cannot see you now,” said she.—“ Presently ! ”—

“ Oh ! very well,” replied Henry. “ I was coming for a comfortable coze, but I will finish my book, and come again,” and he walked off, whistling with light-hearted gaiety as he went.

Anne listened to the sound of his retreating steps. “ He is gone,” said she ; “ but an hour before I was gay and happy as he ! poor boy ! it will be a blow to him too.”

She took up her letter, went to the door, opened it, and with slow steps, descended the stairs to her father’s sitting room. She went in and found him there. He looked up:—

“ Any news in your letter ? ” said he.

Anne mournfully shook her head, “ I want you to read it,”

said she, giving him Charlotte Daventry's letter as she seated herself.

Mr. Grey did not perceive her emotion : he took the letter and began to read. He read the first line, gave a little start, and a quick glance at Anne. He went on, and as he came to Jane Bingley's narration, the blood rushed to his face ; he laid his hand on that of Anne's, and warmly grasped it in his own.

As he proceeded, " Base, cowardly villain," he muttered ; " My poor child !" and again the hand he held in his was warmly pressed. Anne writhed under the words which fell from her father's lips against the person whom she had loved ; alas ! whom still she loved !

The letter at length was finished, and Mr. Grey, turning his face full of pity and sorrow towards her, affectionately placed his arm round her. Anne's calmness was at an end. She threw her arms round her father's neck, and burst into an agony of tears.

" The villain ! treacherous villain !" muttered Mr. Grey, in uncontrolled indignation ; " My sweet innocent child !" as he warmly pressed her to his heart ; " What ? could he not spare you ! must he fix on you too ! my child ! my darling Anne !" and as he leant his head against her cheek—felt the tears trickling down—heard the half-suppressed sobs, he could contain himself no longer, and his tears mingled with those of his child.

For a time neither of them spoke. Anne sobbed quietly and uninterruptedly, as she lay in her father's arms. There is something soothing in sympathizing pity, and she became more composed ; and when her father spoke she raised her head, and looked at him with almost a smile on her face, as she thanked him for his love.

" It is very hard to bear !" said she, after another silence, and pressing her hand to her heart, whilst the tears again burst forth.

" It is a sad blow to you, my child," said Mr. Grey, " and it must be felt. But you have sense—you have firmness of mind—firmness of principle. You have more—you have religion."

Anne's gentle pressure of her father's hand showed that she felt and acknowledged its value ; that she owned its influence.

" Dearest Anne !" said Mr. Grey, warmly, as he affectionately pressed her to his heart. " If my pity—my affection—a father's truest pity, affectionate care,"—his voice faltered, and he paused for a moment, whilst Anne's tears fell silently on his hand. " If a

father's warmest love can give any consolation, you know how fully it is yours!" Anne could only thank him by her looks and the pressure of his hand. Her tears choked her utterance.

It will not be necessary to relate all that passed between the father and child. Anne, with forgiving gentleness, half tried to exculpate Mr. Temple, as her father expressed his indignation against his character, by taking blame to herself.

"I feel that I have to accuse my own vanity in fancying he could love me," said she.

But Mr. Grey could not allow this excuse—strange indeed if he had!

But whilst indignant with Edward Temple, he also bitterly accused himself of indolence and negligence, in allowing the attentions of such a person, without obtaining more information concerning his character, even though the voice of the world had at once cast a suspicion upon it, by pronouncing him to be one of themselves—a man of the world!

Anne would not allow that the slightest blame was attached to her father, as he alluded to his feelings on this subject.

"No, no!" said she eagerly, almost forgetting her own sorrow in anxiety to exculpate him. "Do not say that. It was my fault—only mine! you allowed me to hope: but it was only from what I myself told you—from what perhaps my vanity had made me misinterpret! Dearest papa, do not speak of blaming yourself—that grieves me more than anything. Yes, almost more than *his*,"—her lip quivered—"than *his* unkindness."

"Dearest Anne!" and Mr. Grey kissed her with warmth. He was obliged to turn away his face to hide his emotion.

"You shall see," continued she, wiping the tears from her eyes, and proudly raising her head, "you shall see that I am worthy of your kindness, if my earnest endeavours to be so are successful; great as the blow has been to me"—and her quivering lip and the death-like paleness of her face, succeeding the bright flush called up by a moment of enthusiasm, showed how great it had been—"you shall see that I can struggle against my feelings, when I know that it is my duty to do so. I can be cheerful, if you will only continue to smile on me with approbation, to say that you are pleased with your poor little Anne," and she laid her head half smilingly on his arm; "I feel that I can be cheerful and happy!"—there was

something in the word 'happy', that caused her to pause—something that too strongly belied her feelings at the moment; but she seemed to overcome her momentary weakness, and said, with firmness, "Yes, *happy*, for all who strenuously endeavour to fulfil their duties must be happy : is it not so, papa?"

"Yes, yes, my darling Anne," said Mr. Grey, with emotion, as he pressed her in his arms. "You will—you deserve to be! never before did I know how much I had to be proud of in my child! never before did I love you as I do at this moment!" and he kissed her again and again.

Before Anne quitted her father, she asked that he would tell her mother all that had passed.

"I cannot speak of it calmly myself, I fear," said she; "and mama will hear it better from you. I have still another favour to ask," she added. "It would be very painful to me to have the subject discussed; indeed I feel as if I could scarcely bear it! Will you then say that I wish—that it would be a comfort to me if I felt sure that no allusion would be made to it? I feel it is better it should not be named again : my mind having once been relieved by the expression of my feelings, it will perhaps be better for me to let it be entirely dropped for the future."

Anne returned to her own room : how changed in feeling! how different to what she had been but a few short hours before, when she had walked out in rapturous delight at the thoughts of meeting Edward Temple once more.

The meeting so fondly anticipated must now be shunned! her only chance of happiness must be in avoiding all future ones, and in forgetting the past. She must learn to forget him—to forget all that had made her happiness for so long a period—all that had been blended in her mind with every thought, and pleasure, and circumstance. She found that it had been long indeed since she first began to unite him in her thoughts with all that occurred to her. Pursuits, improvement, pleasures, duties, everything had been connected with him—had been for his sake, with a view to his approbation, or to render herself worthy to be loved by him. She must now eradicate the feelings and associations which had entwined themselves with every action of her life, and had seemed to form the charm of her existence.

Anne returned to her room ; the rush of thought and recollection crowded upon her, and threatened once more to overwhelm her. She threw herself upon her knees, and humbly and earnestly prayed for that help which is never asked in vain. She prayed for assistance to enable her to bear with resignation the sorrow that had befallen her ; to bear without a murmur the blighting of her happiness in life. She prayed not in vain : she rose from her knees with a feeling of serene and almost cheerful hope.

CHAPTER LI.

THE next day Charlotte Daventry returned.

The meeting between her and Anne was painful. There was a violent burst of grief on Anne's part. She was completely overpowered for a time, by the agony of feeling called forth upon the first sight of Charlotte, but she struggled to be calm, and she succeeded ; and that evening she sat occupying herself, as usual, in the family circle, calm, and to an unobserving spectator, she might, perhaps, have borne the appearance of cheerfulness.

Mr. Grey had taken care that nothing should occur to agitate her. No allusion was made to the subject of her distress. Mrs. Grey only called her, ' dear Anne,' every word she said to her—looked very sorry, and spoke in a gentle, subdued voice.

And Charlotte Daventry ! how did she watch the poor gentle Anne ? How did she watch with eager interest the care-worn face—the faint smiles—the slight tremor in the lips—the languid form ! How did she listen to the heart-rending misery of those tones, that voice, whose gentle gaiety had ever possessed such a gladdening, soothing charm ! now, alas ! gone ! whilst the effort to be cheerful only spoke more utter desolation and wretchedness. How did she watch the picture of patient suffering, of unrepining misery, of blighted happiness in one so lovely, young, and gentle ?

Charlotte Daventry watched intently ! Anne knew, at times, that

she was watching her, and she thanked her in her heart, and tried to hide her secret agony in the smile—the cheerful tone.

Charlotte Daventry watched, and she stooped at times over her work to conceal her emotion. Nay! she did not smile! it could not be! Anne Grey smiled, the sufferer smiled, but Charlotte Daventry could not!

And what were the feelings of the affectionate warm-hearted boy, Henry, when told what had passed? What were his feelings when he sat watching his dear sister Anne, his own darling Anne, that evening?

His indignation and his wretchedness had been extreme; and, now, as he saw her patiently smiling, whilst her face was pale, her eyes dim, and her lip, at times, quivering with repressed feeling, he could not conceal his emotion. He was obliged to quit the room to hide his tears, and compose himself to return again; and then, as he looked at her, he was once more overcome. He thought it was not manly to cry, but he could not help it: “who could help crying for her?” and he sobbed with bitterness as he thought of her distress.

“How he wished the cowardly villain were there that he might be punished by the sight, as even he must be if he could see her; he wished he could know how they all despised him. How he wished he were old enough to fight him. He would taunt him, challenge him, shoot him to the heart, and proclaim him to all the world a traitor and a coward!”

These were boyish feelings, and mixed with boyish error and romance, and yet, with Henry, who would not wish that the secret bringer of misery, the treacherous blighter of happiness to the young, the light-hearted, the confiding, could, if it were possible, be held up to shame?

“My dear boy,” said his father, to Henry, “you must learn to restrain your feelings. By allowing them to appear you are adding unhappiness to your sister.”

“Am I! am I?” cried Henry, vehemently, “then nothing shall make me show what I am feeling! but, really, I cannot bear to see her!” and he turned his face away from his father.

Mr. Grey took his hand. “I do not blame you for your feelings, my dear boy, and I know it is a difficult task to restrain them. But

we must think of Anne. Think how she restrains her feelings for our sake. Hers are more difficult to repress than ours, Henry, and yet, you see, she does repress them. ”

“ Yes, yes ! I know it, ” said Henry. “ What a brute I must be to have helped to give her pain ! but it is seeing her so patient, there is something in that that I cannot bear. How I wish, ” he added, vehemently, after a pause, “ that that fellow were here, that he might be cut to the heart with the sight ! ”

Anne’s feelings were indeed difficult to restrain. She was possessed of a strong and well-regulated mind ; her temper was composed and serene ; but these qualities were united to ardent affections, and an acute sensitiveness of feeling. Gentle as she was, she had not too readily bestowed her heart, but, when once it had been given, it was truly, and for ever. She loved with all the tenderness of her nature, and terrible was the blow when she found her affections misplaced. She had trusted fondly and confidingly, and she felt herself deceived.

She had to exert every power of endurance and resignation to support her from sinking under the bitter consciousness of affections wounded, trampled on, and disregarded. Her parents and family were relieved by witnessing her seeming cheerfulness, and began to hope that she felt less what she endured so patiently ; but, alas ! she had exerted too much. In rather less than a week after she had received Charlotte Daventry’s letter, as she sat at work in the evening, Mr. Grey was startled by an exclamation from Charlotte. Anne had fallen back in her chair. She was senseless.

She was carried to her room, the usual restoratives were applied, and, after a time, her senses returned ; but it was in vain she struggled to support herself—all power of exertion was gone—she lay still and half fainting on the bed.

Medical assistance was called in. The family apothecary, a clever man, though a strange eccentric character, arrived. He was eagerly questioned, by Mr. Grey, as soon as he quitted his patient’s apartment. He declared that Miss Grey was evidently suffering under the effects of mental distress, some sudden and severe blow, which had been too much for her delicate frame.

“ I always speak the truth, Sir, ” said he, to the anxious father. “ Your daughter is very ill, and will be very ill. I see she has had

something on her mind. You should not have allowed it, Sir. It shall not be a brain fever—we shall save her from that. Something near it. But don't be alarmed," as he saw Mr. Grey's agitated face. "Come, all will be well! only I will not give false hopes. She will not be well yet. She'll have an illness, but she'll come out of it," and he quitted the room, leaving Mr. Grey in an alarming state of anxiety, although still relying on the words of the apothecary, which promised him that Anne should recover.

His reliance was severely put to the test. For days and nights did she lie scarcely seeming to live; her face pale as death, her eyes half closed; at other times her pallid cheeks flushing with fever, her eyes sparkling with unnatural brilliancy, and wildly talking in her delirium.

Her parents watched over her anxiously and fearfully. There was hope, the physician said, who had been called in as her illness increased. "She may recover."

"She *may*!" Oh, what fearful words to a parent's heart! Their child—their sweet child. Her life then hung upon a thread. 'She *may* recover.' There was then merely a chance! there was hope indeed, but how much of fear!

Silently they sat by the bed of sickness, and there lay the patient, gentle Anne, pale—wasted—suffering—unconscious. She moved at times, whilst her half closed eyes vacantly and heavily gazed upon the anxious watchers round.

"There is hope! Oh, God! there is hope, and may it be? Oh, may she live! Oh, God! grant that she may live! and yet so pure, so gentle, and so perfect! is she not for Thee, is she not Thine? is it not a selfish prayer? and, yet, my own sweet child! light, and peace, and joy of my home! Oh! not yet—take her not yet!"

Such was the father's mental prayer. His eyes were turned eagerly and intently on her face. She moved, unclosed her eyes. He sought to read the physician's countenance. He was watching too, and his face was anxious, but there was pleasure in his look as he saw the slight movement, and the half unclosing of her heavy eye-lids. He looked up; he caught the father's eye.

"All will be well," was gently whispered. "I *hope* that all will be well."

"Thank God!" was the father's inward ejaculation; but he did

not speak : he buried his face in his hands ; the thanksgiving was mentally uttered, and then his eyes were once more on his child.

The tear stood there as he looked again on her pallid form, but it was no longer the tear of anguish. It was one of gratitude ; it arose from a thankful heart.

The crisis was over. The hours of agonizing doubt and fear were at an end ! yet there were many sorrowful and anxious days to come. The poor sufferer still lay weak, and helpless, and oh ! the anguish in that care-worn face ! did it not speak of a broken heart ?

“ Ought I not to be thankful, dearest Charlotte ? ” whispered she, to her cousin, one day as she sat watching by her bed ; “ Ought I not to be thankful that I am saved ? for I might have died ! ” and she stopped in strong emotion.

“ I have been very ill, ” she said again, “ and yet, though I am saved, I cannot be thankful as I ought. It is sad, *so* sad ! ” and she pressed her hand to her heart as the tears rolled fast and silently down her cheeks, whilst Charlotte sat bending over her too much affected to speak.

But Anne recovered—it was slowly, very slowly, and it was sad indeed to see her as she rose from her bed : to see her pale face and wasted form. Sickness and sorrow had, indeed, been busy there ! Sometimes the painful thought came across her as she lay, weak and suffering, on her bed, ‘ how was it *she* should have thus suffered, whilst *he*, the cause of all, was gay and happy ? ’ When insensibility and delirium had passed away, her mind was once more capable of exercising its powers. It awoke to memory. It was hard, at such a time, to be thankful. Illness had not altered the cause for sorrow : that was as poignant as ever, but it rendered the frame more delicate which must now struggle with grief. For many days she had retained only a confused recollection of something painful, but of the existence of which she was uncertain ; but with the return of consciousness, memory brought back the truth in all its vivid reality.

“ It is not a dream, and I *am* unhappy ! ”

Some may have known the wretchedness of that conviction as it forces itself first upon the mind after insensibility, illness, or sleep,

had lulled them into moments, or hours, of forgetfulness. Some may have known it, but happy those who have been spared!

Anne Grey felt the bitterness of that return to consciousness. She awoke from her delirium, and she knew that she was unhappy.

“Yes, he is gay and careless,” thought she. “He is in the midst of pleasure! whilst I am lying here suffering, broken-hearted! Yes, whilst I was lying on the point of death, whilst there was but a thread between life and death, he was, perhaps, at that very moment laughing and talking, careless that I was in danger! Oh, God! support me. It is a bitter thought!” and she tried to forget: but how useless the attempt where the whole mind is imbued with one painful subject forcing away all others.

“Charlotte,” said she, gently, to her cousin, who sat by her bed, “what day is this?”

Charlotte named the day: Anne turned round with a groan. It was the very day that she was to have met Edward Temple at Chatterton!

“He is there then,” thought she. “He is there close to me. He hears, he must hear of my illness—my danger. But will it make any difference? No, he will be as gay as ever: he, who once in that house expressed such interest: who—but I must not think of that,” and she turned towards Charlotte, and tried to talk to her.

Edward Temple was not at Chatterton as Anne supposed. His excuse had been sent at the time of Charlotte Daventry’s return to Weston from her visit to the Bingleys’, and he was, probably, thus left in ignorance of her state.

CHAPTER LII.

ANNE had time to reflect on her own conduct with regard to Edward Temple. As yet, she could not bear to believe him wholly.

to blame. Had the sin been against herself alone, she would probably have excused him, by at once taking all to herself. And still ! might there not be some palliation ? The facts were true, but there might be circumstances attending them that none but herself could know. There could not be a doubt as to his indifference towards herself, or of the fact of his having paid attentions to others, which had ended in their unhappiness ; but still, Anne thought there might be excuses.

To believe the object of her attachment unworthy was indeed a most bitter feeling. She felt that even to be separated from him for ever, or to see him married to another, would have been a comparatively trifling sorrow, could she but still have esteemed him. Often did she try to find every or any excuse for him. “ Perhaps, thought she, he is easily captivated by beauty, real or imaginary : he may be charmed for the moment and carried on beyond what his calmer judgment can sanction. But, then, might he not have given some hint that he had loved before, that he was likely not to be constant ? When he saw that I loved him, had he been generous, he would have done this. But not a word ! He was anxious to deceive, that he might ensure the continuance of his own selfish amusement. For this he could sacrifice me ! Oh, how unlike the Edward Temple that I believed him to be !—But, yet,” thought Anne, “ can it be ? Perhaps he thought that I ought not to have believed he could love me ? And yet, what other could I think ?” His words, his looks, came full on her mind. “ His knowledge that I loved him ! Yes ! he could not be deceived in that !” The faint colour rushed to her face at the idea. “ Oh ! what would I give that he were !

“ How much less bitter if I could still respect and esteem him ! But, perhaps he *is* still estimable ! There must be some mistake. It is impossible that he could thus have spoken—have assured me so often by look and manner that he loved me—have seemed so anxious for my approbation—so solicitous for my welfare—so fearful lest the world should spoil me—so easily wounded by any appearance of indifference on my part. Could he calmly, and deliberately have laid down a plan to deceive me ? When he saw that I believed in his love, could he still coldly, and calculatingly persevere ? Oh no, it never can be true ! And yet, how well he knew I loved him !”

the colour mounted to her pale face ; “ how well he knows it even now ! and yet he can desert, forget—he can—” she shuddered, it was too much ! The thought of herself, and her sufferings, whilst he who had pretended thus to love, whom she had loved so devotedly, remained careless that he was causing her misery ! the thought was too bitter. She buried her face in her hands and burst into a violent fit of tears, sobbing with hysterical violence, whilst Charlotte Daventry watched over her with looks of anxious pity and commiseration.

But, Anne, in time, became more firm, and when she left her room, though pale and weakened by illness, it was with the resolution to think no more of one who was undeserving of her thoughts. She tried to feel happy and resigned. She came down stairs cheerful and composed, as far as her strength permitted, entered into all her usual occupations, and listened and attended to the wishes, the cares, the trifling interests, grievances, or pleasures, of those around her. She resolved that none should see that she was less happy than formerly, and her resolution was acted upon.

It was in the calm routine of domestic life, in the fulfilment of her duties, the scrupulous attendance to the happiness of others, that she endeavoured to forget an attachment which she now looked upon as culpable.

Yes, Anne Grey ! persevere in that calm and holy path, and here, even here, you will meet your reward. Those looks of love—those cheerful faces—those kind approving words—these all are yours, and in your heart there lives the conscious sense of rectitude—of firm and well-directed fortitude ! Though the brightness has faded from your eye, though your smile has lost its gaiety, and your step its buoyancy, yet, even here, you have your reward ; even here, we can envy you.

Time passed away, and everything at Weston went on once more as usual. The remembrance of past anxiety had faded from the minds of most ; yet, perhaps, by all it was not yet forgotten. Perhaps, on some, sorrow had left its traces—had left impressions never to be effaced—had left a blank not to be filled again.

It will be asked, did Edward Temple know of Anne Grey’s illness ? Could he, if he had known of her danger, have been careless and unfeeling ?

Even so it appeared, for he *was* acquainted with it.

At the time of her greatest danger, Edward Temple, and Sir Henry Poynton, were staying together at the house of a mutual friend. One day, as all the party were engaged in the interesting occupation of reading letters, Sir Henry suddenly exclaimed, in a tone of horror, "Good God! Anne Grey is not likely to live! she is in the greatest danger. Good God!" continued he, "how dreadful! That sweet girl!"

At that moment the door was closed. Edward Temple had left the room. What, then! was he too indifferent to make him care to remain in the room whilst her illness was mentioned? or was he unwilling to hear more on this subject?

There was one who did not seem so indifferent to the knowledge of Anne's danger: this was George Foley. He had returned to England, and was at Chatterton during her illness. Absence had not diminished his love for Anne, and nothing could exceed the agony with which he awaited the issue of her illness, the dreadful suspense and anxiety of those days, during which her life was almost despaired of.

Mrs. Grey, in the goodness of her heart, wished that he might be rewarded for all he had suffered during her illness, in the way most accordant with his wishes. Mr. Grey was not quite without sharing this hope, for he thought highly of George Foley, and believed that no person could be more capable of rendering his daughter happy.

Time seemed to give some foundation to his hope. George Foley had won Anne's esteem, and there seemed a chance that he might win her heart. Anne could not admit the chance; her affections had once been given, and they could not easily be bestowed a second time. A blight had been cast upon her, and she felt that nothing would restore to her the freshness of her former feelings. She was dead to the sentiment of love; but esteem and friendship might take its place, and might satisfy the wishes of a lover who knew that he could never hope for more: she even allowed, that should she ever be induced to marry, George Foley would be the person on whom she would bestow her hand, provided he could be satisfied with so cold a return for his ardent devotion.

CHAPTER LIII.

I BELIEVE that nothing is so unsatisfactory to the feelings of a person of sensibility as to be but half miserable. To be completely so is a height of enjoyment which all must envy, but to which none but heroes and heroines ever attain. Some little happy event will interfere, and rouse the despairing, indolent mind to the trouble of smiling. Every one knows the trouble of a smile, from the unhappy sentimentalist, to the sulky child who is forced into one, when virtue has triumphed over dignity, after a five minutes' state of pouting enjoyment.

With a full appreciation of the delights of sorrow, I could have wished to have ended my book in one unvaried strain of melancholy; but alas! it cannot be, for the bells at Alford tell a different tale, and the tale is repeated in the broad and merry smiles which play on the face of Mrs. Grey. Lady Stoketon was become the mother of a fine boy: the finest baby of course that ever was seen: so all the servants in the house pronounced it to be, so Mrs. Grey pronounced it to be, and so every one pronounced it to be who came after its birth on congratulatory visits to Alford.

What a quantity of the finest babies that ever were seen there must be in the world!

Mrs. Grey was the happiest of grandmothers. She had gone with never-ceasing delight through the routine of gruel, monthly nurses, babies' cries, dill water, caudle, tea and toast; and if Mrs. Grey had not been happy, what grandmother on earth can ever expect to be so, for all went on well, thanks to her excellent nursing!

Sophy came down looking pretty and interesting, baby was the finest child ever seen; Mrs. Grey was the happiest of women: and she returned to Weston two months after the birth of the son and heir, loaded with happiness and an invaluable treasure! a very small piece of something, that she assured every one was a lock of hair, a lock of Sophy's fine baby's fine hair. It was very fine; some people

perhaps might have found it difficult to see it; but then it was enveloped in plenty of silver paper and writing paper, it was labelled in large letters with the day of the week, month, year, name of the infant, and the number of days old; so that it was altogether a curious and interesting relic.

Charlotte Daventry was left with Sophy, and she was promised a reward for the seclusion of the few last months by plenty of gaiety.

It was exactly the time of year for it: it was the period when the woods, the fields, and the hedges were taking a long farewell of greenness and sunshine: and in their russet dresses stood prepared for the cold, the storm, and the snow. Nature gives one bright smile before she becomes a dead letter. Man then steps forth in all his glory, and puts forward his little claims to be gay and consequential. Nature resigns the task with a sigh and a smile, in pity and contempt to see the pigmy man taking her place, and thinking to be gay when she is sad. But man heeds neither the smile, nor the sigh. He lights the fires—he calls for the candles—he ignites the gas—he writes his notes of invitation: he has built a house, and he fills it; and what does he care for nature? He is a pigmy, but he does not know it, and he shoots, he hunts, he dances, and is gay: and nature sleeps whilst he is hard at work on trifles, and toiling with a breathless speed and a useless haste after that bright unknown, ever flying from his grasp—that glittering deceiver, pleasure.

It was at this happy time of the year, Charlotte Daventry was left at Alford; archeries and races were dying away; winter balls and visiting commencing.

Lady Stoketon was very fond of her baby. It was a charming plaything, and Sophy was delighted to play with it; but she had not the slightest idea of remaining more at home because she was a happy mother.

Lord Stoketon thought differently. He was so fond of his child, that he would willingly have remained at home all winter for the pleasure of watching its progress, and seeing Sophy nursing and playing with it. Charlotte Daventry seemed to agree with him in his view of the subject. She thought that the wish to leave home with the baby there was extraordinary; but she never said so when Sophy was present. On the contrary, when alone with her, Char

lotte's good nature carried her so far as to make her express her concurrence in the folly of remaining at home. In short, Charlotte and Lady Stoketon agreed that it would be quite absurd for her to be always shut up at Alford. Charlotte, impelled by the feeling of the moment, even hinted that she thought Lord Stoketon rather unkind for wishing her to do so.

How was it possible for Lady Stoketon to dissent, as she listened to her words, and saw the admiring looks of Charlotte resting on her countenance ! and if she, who was only her cousin, was so anxious that she should enjoy the amusement so well suited to her age, was it not unnatural that a husband should be wanting in the affectionate feeling which dictated this wish ?

The tear for a moment glistened in her eye, as Charlotte made some allusion to this idea, and a pretty smile chased it away as she spoke of the necessity that youth and beauty like hers should be seen, and not immured for ever in the dungeon-keep of domestic quiet. With fairy colours she brought before her a bright and alluring sketch of admiration and society ; and cold and blank the once still more cheering picture fell neglected, dark, and gloomy beneath her touch.

Sophy smiled : it was a pretty vision. No wonder then that she should smile, and with a pettish and decided air resolve that neither will or whim should interpose, to bid the vision fade away. A husband's wish was now but a tyrant's caprice ; and could she, this gay being, all brightness and sunshine, waste beauty, youth, and gladness in uncongenial gloom ?

Charlotte Daventry looked upon her cousin, as blooming, and lovely, she sat before her, and the question was answered as affection dictated. " No, no," she fondly whispered, " it must not be ! Who would immure a being such as this ?"

Sophy laughed, as Charlotte spoke with playful admiration and enthusiasm ; and then what should follow but that they must be gay ? Archeries, balls, large parties at country houses, and still more charming large parties at home, passed in quick succession. It was very delightful.

" How often we have met Captain Herbert lately !" was Sophy's remark to her cousin one day.

" If you were kind, you ought to pity two people for that,"

said Charlotte. "One is your very humble servant, Charlotte Daventry; the other your very humble—no, not humble—what word shall I use that is more applicable to the person in question? your very *devoted* servant, Captain Herbert himself. If you were kind, you ought to be very uneasy about me, for I am running the most imminent risk of losing my heart to a person who does not care a single sou for its possession: and you have no pity! nothing but the conviction of something I will not name to you could have preserved me from being profoundly in love long ago. But there *is* one thing! and for that, pity again—pity, my Lady Stoketon, is required from you! but you will not grant it, I see by that look. I don't know a more agreeable person," she added, after a little pause, and in a more serious tone than that in which she had just spoken. "I do not know a more agreeable person. A woman might well be proud who could captivate such a person," continued she, rather as if thinking aloud, than addressing another.

Sophy had laughed as Charlotte first spoke: she had made no other answer: she now got up to fetch a drawing which lay in the other part of the room, and remained for two or three minutes looking over a portfolio at the distant table before she returned. Whether she had attended to her cousin's last remarks it was impossible to say.

As she returned, Charlotte addressed her with what appeared to have been the result of her deliberations, "Lord Stoketon is not so tall as Captain Herbert."

"Oh no!" was the reply.

"Did you observe how well he looked the other night at the ball?" continued Charlotte, as if apropos of what she had last said. "There was a group of people standing together—a little knot of what are called very good-looking people, and so they were, no doubt: but Captain Herbert was a little taller than the rest, and there was something so *distingué* about him, that made all around him look ill. Moreover it seemed that, though others were aware of it, he was not: he was thinking of something else: he was watching another person," and she looked archly at Sophy as she paused.

Sophy stooped over her work, and blushed. She was at that moment ashamed and mortified at herself, for being *able* to do so

on Captain Herbert's account. Charlotte saw the blush and smiled; but she appeared unconscious, and was going to say more upon Captain Herbert, and the ball, when Lady Stoketon raised her head, and interrupted all farther discussion on these subjects by beginning to speak of her little boy. She *would* not hear more about Captain Herbert : a feeling of something wrong had struck her, as she felt the colour mount to her face. She would no longer be so, and she spoke of her child.

Charlotte Daventry remained six weeks at Alford. Her going was delayed day after day : neither Sophy nor Lord Stoketon could part with her. In short, if the truth be spoken, they both felt at that time a shyness of being left to amuse one another. The presence of a third person was desirable : there was that between them which made both afraid of the awkwardness of a tête-à-tête. They were neither of them happy. The delightful vision of pleasure which continued gaiety was expected to realize, had disappointed in its actual presence, and though Sophy had obtained her wish, and indulged in one unceasing course of dissipation, she had been far from happy! many who beheld her, sparkling, and animated in society, would scarcely have believed that so it was; and many more had envied her, who saw not into the heart, and read in that the unhappiness which was springing from a reproving conscience.

Lord Stoketon felt uneasy at Sophy's excessive love of gaiety. He had hinted to her that he had rather she should remain more quietly at home : she saw that he disliked her going out so much; she felt that she was wrong, but she would not or could not give up her amusement to his wishes. Charlotte seemed to think that he was unjust in wishing her to stay at home, and that in fact it was he who was to blame, and not herself; still conscience but too often whispered to her heart a different, and a less flattering tale. Charlotte seemed to think that if she relinquished her amusements to his caprice so early, it would lead to her becoming a complete slave.

“ And if Charlotte thinks so, I dare say she is right,” thought she, “ for she is so very fond of George. I must not give up to his whims. Charlotte would think it very weak if I did, and it was but the other day she praised my firmness. To be sure, George is very

good-natured, and he certainly wishes that I should enter into society moderately, and I really have had a great deal, and perhaps he is right."

Unluckily just as Lady Stoketon had got thus far in more salutary reflections, a card of Captain Herbert's was put into her hands, and at the same time a note from Lady Frances Drakely, which conjured up a train of pleasing and flattering images, and when the note was answered and she resumed her reflections, the tone in which they were pursued was different.

"I feel that I am quite right in going from home. What very young married woman, pretty, and admired as I am, as Charlotte says, would stay at home, even as much as I do? I gave up London this year because he wished it. I am sure he need not be afraid of my allowing any one's attentions too far, and he ought to be satisfied with that."

Such as these were her reflections at times, and she continued her gaiety whilst her husband watched her with painful anxiety. He intrusted his grievances to Charlotte. She entered fully into his feelings and allowed, with a sigh, that they were not unfounded. If Sophy's natural good feeling did not lead her to prefer the happiness of her husband to her own amusement, what could be done? Nothing indeed! Charlotte Daventry sighed again, as she said, "Nothing can be done!"

"One should have thought," she would add, "that with such a husband, with that sweet infant, everything so attractive at home, she might have been contented to remain in it; she might have found her pleasures there rather than elsewhere."

Lord Stoketon saw with pain that she fully acknowledged his cause for uneasiness. Even under her ardent desire to diminish his distress, truth often obliged her to aggravate it. She appeared to think that his only means of retaining any part of Sophy's affection was by leaving her to the enjoyment of happiness in her own way, and that if anything were likely to bring her to a sense of her duty to him, it would be by his forbearing kindness and generosity now.

Things were in this state between the husband and wife when Charlotte Daventry quitted them. Captain Herbert was become Sophy's almost constant attendant at all the places where they met.

His vanity had been flattered at first by the idea that she who was so pretty and admired entertained a partiality for him, and had been piqued by his indifference when they met after her marriage. Vanity had been the commencement of his attentions; stronger feelings might have secured their continuance. Sophy's vanity had likewise first been touched by the idea of this gay, handsome, popular man being unhappy on her account; it was this made her throw a little kindness into her manner towards him. Vanity led her to keep up his admiration for her: vanity led her at last to think his attentions very agreeable—his *constant* attentions quite indispensable; and vanity, at the time Charlotte Daventry quitted Alford, was leading her into still farther error: she was then in danger—imminent danger.

“Good-bye, dear Charlotte,” sobbed Lady Stoketon, as she kissed her over and over again; “Good-bye, dearest Charlotte, I cannot bear to part with you!”

Sophy was displeased with herself, and she was unhappy. She could not bear to part with Charlotte, though she had her husband left to her.

“Good-bye, Charlotte,” said Lord Stoketon, “God bless you!” and he wrung her hand as he handed her into the carriage; and he returned to the house to conceal his emotion—the emotion caused by the feeling that he was losing the affections of his wife.

CHAPTER LIV.

“GOOD-BYE! pressure of the hand! tears! Yes! that is as it should be,” said Charlotte Daventry, to herself. “There were no tears—no hands pressed before! And now to my home! Now to keep the fire alive! to gently hint, and softly insinuate—to breathe his name! she shall not forget. No! And yet—Charlotte Daventry, what have you gained? where is your reward? *Reward!* that is not it! Is it not to escape a father's curse—a father's dying looks!

the death struggle—the horror—the ghastly despair? Not to see it—not to have it ever, glaring—weighing—pressing on my heart”—she gasped—“is it not reward?”

She paused; a thrill of horror crept through her veins.

“Oh! let the happy guess what are the rewards of despair! let them turn with shuddering from the reward of successful revenge! let them turn with thankfulness, and say, ‘Blessed are they who escape such reward!’ Have I not turned in anguish as I saw her, suffering, sorrowing, pitied, sorrowed over! Yes! have I not turned away in the bitterness of my envy—in the anguish of envying what others wept to see. Theirs was blessedness to what I felt. She could be cheerful! she could smile. How have I cursed that smile! it was serene and peaceful; and *I!* I was gay—I could laugh! but the peace, the stillness of that sorrowing smile seemed to curse me—to mock me, with the envy that it raised. Have I not schemed, worked, toiled—forgot all love, forgot all hope, all pity, all remorse! schemed, succeeded; yet still a serpent rankling here: that death-like body ever lying, struggling there without one moment free!—and yet, I laugh at all!” and Charlotte Daventry laughed aloud; but none heard that laugh—the carriage rolled rapidly along, and she was soon smiling with affectionate pleasure, as she received the hearty welcome of her aunt, and uncle, and cousins at Weston.

When they retired to their chambers, Anne was to hear from her all she had to tell of Sophy. She related something of her gaiety—something of Lord Stoketon’s unhappiness: she drew a melancholy picture of domestic discomfort at Alford. Anne retired to rest, to feel that although her own unhappiness had been great, and though she still suffered more than she would own to any but herself, that hers was nothing in comparison to that which might be dreaded for Sophy. There was no self-reproach to be mingled with her own sorrow; but, Sophy—poor Sophy!—how would it be with her?

Anne could not sleep that night: she could only think of the risk that her sister was running, and of what might be done to save her. Charlotte’s words rang incessantly in her ears, as she described the folly and vanity of Sophy: as she spoke of the attentions of Captain Herbert; as she drew with vivid colours the distress of Lord Stoke-

ton. Her words still rang in her ears, with all the distinctness with which they had first struck upon her, and filled her with sorrow and dismay.

Sophy was indeed in danger. The career of folly was begun, and when once commenced how seldom does it pause in its course ! how seldom does it stop but when checked by a strong, determined hand ! how seldom does it not rush onward with increasing speed, till, like a headlong mountain stream, it falls into the abyss of sin and crime below ! And so might it have been in the case of this young and thoughtless being : but the danger was averted, and she was saved, as not unfrequently happens, from an evil of which she had no apprehension, by that which she would most have dreaded to befall her.

Two days after Charlotte's arrival at Weston, a letter came from Lord Stoketon, saying that their child had been taken alarmingly ill. He said that Sophy was in the greatest distress, and he begged that Anne might be allowed to come to her, for she was so overcome with anxiety and apprehension that he feared her health would suffer. In such a case what could be of such service and comfort to her as the support of her sister's presence, and he earnestly entreated that Anne might be permitted to come to them immediately.

The letter was written in the greatest agitation and distress ; there could not be a question as to the propriety of complying with his request, and Anne set off directly on her journey to Alford.

As she quitted home, she felt that even sickness and sorrow might be turned into blessings at times, for she saw, in Sophy's distress, a hope that she might be snatched from the danger that hung over her—that it was not yet too late to restore her once more to her sense of duty, and to domestic happiness and confidence.

When Anne reached Alford she found her sister completely exhausted by agitation and alarm. It was evident that her conscience had smitten her, perhaps with many serious faults, and amongst others with neglect of her child. The distress was too poignant to be accounted for in any other way.

The child still lived : faint hopes were entertained of its recovery ; but it seemed scarcely probable they should be realized. Anne tried to make Sophy take some rest, but she would not be separated from

her baby. She remained constantly weeping over it, as it lay with its eyes half closed;—pale, and with life, apparently, all but extinct.

Sophy would not be moved from the room. Her eyes were fixed on her child in speechless agony, lest it should have ceased to breathe without her being aware of it. Whenever she could spare a moment from this painful contemplation, she turned her eyes towards her husband, whilst the tears streamed down her cheeks, and she seemed by her looks to ask forgiveness.

It was an affecting sight, and yet Anne could almost find comfort in it. Better that even the child should die, than that Sophy should continue her career of folly till repentance was too late!—She had been saved but just in time! Anne knew not how nearly, or she would have thought that even the degree of sorrow evinced by her, as she hung over the cradle of her infant, was but equal to the occasion which called it forth.

Still more affecting was it to witness Lord Stoketon's emotion—his anxiety for his wife. All his devoted fondness returned, when he saw her thus repentant and suffering. He forgot all her foibles—her errors—all but that she was the wife whom he had loved. She was now in distress—and he would not remember that it partly arose from her own misconduct. As he saw her fond, imploring, penitent looks at himself, saw her bending over her child in speechless misery, he could scarcely conceal his agitation. He was often obliged to leave the room, to give vent alone to the feelings which he could not control.

But the penitent prayers of the mother were heard. The child, after lying in a state of insensibility for nearly a week, looking, still, calm, and motionless, like a beautiful corpse, recovered. Signs of consciousness returned. It seemed half cruel to wish for its return. It looked, as it lay on its nurse's lap, like a being of another world—too calm, too lovely, and too placid, for earth. It seemed in its sinless purity to belong to Heaven, and who would wish that it should return to life—to be defaced with sin—to suffer—to lose its heavenly beauty, and be brought once more to earth!

Yet the mother could not feel thus. She could feel nothing but the excess of joy, as her child was restored to her—of ecstasy so great—so overpowering, that the sobs burst from her as she heard

those blessed words, "The child is out of danger!" and saw the little infant unclose its eyes, and heard its feeble cry.

The mother's heart at that moment was too full. Overcome with gratitude, with ecstasy, she could only weep, and, falling on her knees, lift up her soul in thankfulness to the God who had heard her prayers—who had relieved her from the dreadful sense of unavailing remorse.

Her husband's prayers mingled with hers, as he hid his face in his hands and sobbed aloud, then clasped his wife to his bosom, and all sorrow, all anxiety, all estrangement were forgotten at that moment by both, once more restored to confidence and joy.

Anne could only weep and pray with them. Her heart was full. She had sorrowed—she had prayed; her gentle spirit had grieved; and she had now her reward. Her humble heart now swelled with gratitude to God, and on her knees she prayed that she might be grateful for the blessing of that hour:—that her own lot, cheerless as it was—blighted as her happiness had been, might never raise one murmur in her breast—that, with blessings thus granted to her prayers, she might bear without one repining thought the sorrow which had cast its sadness on her own peculiar path.

Anne returned home with a peaceful and contented heart. She left Sophy and her husband once more happy together, and in Sophy's mind an impression which she believed would never be effaced, and which she trusted would have a beneficial effect on the whole future course of her life. She returned to Weston, and with joy, which she knew would be participated, she imparted to Charlotte the whole of what had passed. Charlotte fully sympathized in her feelings of thankfulness and delight. Nay, she even went beyond them in her expressions of joy.

No sooner had Anne related all she had to tell, than Robert Dodson entered.

"Here is Anne come back," said Charlotte, "and see! she is blooming as a rose once more! all the lilies which have been usurping undue power are vanishing like April showers. But, alas! I see," she added, with a momentary sadness in her tone, as she watched the bright colour fading from Anne's cheeks; "Like them, alas! they have only vanished to return!"

Anne smiled, but it was half mournfully.

“ Still,” resumed Charlotte, in a lively tone, “ let us rejoice in the sun-shine whilst it lasts ! It seldom lingers long !” and she laughed with something of discordant gaiety. “ We have excellent news to tell,” continued she, to Robert Dodson. “ The baby is quite well, and Sophy happy as a queen ! as we used to say, when queens were happy ! It is all ‘ couleur de rose ’ at Alford. I am so happy !”

“ I am very glad, indeed !” said Robert Dodson ; and to do him justice, we believe that he only said what he felt ; but whether some of his pleasure did not arise from Charlotte Daventry’s very cordial manner, and the impression that she was ‘ so happy,’ we cannot pretend to say.

He certainly looked at her with great delight. She was in high spirits, and they seemed to rise still higher during his visit. They rose to an extraordinary pitch : Anne was almost startled at this exuberance of glee. Robert Dodson was in rapture. He gazed upon Charlotte as she talked and laughed, watched her fascinating smiles, and flashing eyes, listened to the laughter which every now and then burst in unchecked merriment from her lips, watched the bright colour mantling on her cheeks—looked, listened, and thought he never had seen so captivating a being. No wonder when all this beauty and animation were called forth on his approach, were lavished on him, that the sober matter of fact Robert Dodson should very nearly forget the cautious reserve inculcated by two former refusals.

He always made some blunders. He had blundered twice in proposing to Anne. He was now very near blundering into a proposal to Charlotte Daventry ; from that he was saved by the presence of Anne ; but not to miss his blunder altogether, he turned to Anne, and said, “ We had a very pleasant visit to Chatterton the other day. Miss Foley seems a very nice girl, and Mrs. Foley very amiable indeed. They were wondering why your friend Mr. Temple never came to Chatterton now : they had asked him several times, and he never would come. I told them he had not been to Weston of late, though I knew he came very often at one time. Have you seen him lately ?”

This was distressing to Anne. She had partly schooled herself into hearing his name without emotion ; but still there was no

question she could so ill bear to be asked as whether she had seen him lately.

Yet she answered composedly, "No, not for some time," and then became busily occupied in her drawing, whilst Robert Dodson turned to Charlotte again, and renewed his conversation with her.

Robert Dodson's remark had given rise to some painful thoughts, and Anne was left at full liberty to indulge them. Here was an additional proof, if any were wanting, of Edward Temple's indifference. He refused all invitations into the neighbourhood—he knew she had been ill—he knew she had been near dying. She was aware of that fact, for she had since seen Sir Henry Poynton, and he had related the whole circumstance of his receiving the letter, and telling those present of her dangerous illness : he had enumerated with gratuitous kindness the names of all the party assembled in the house, and that of Edward Temple, of course, was not omitted. He knew it then! and yet he continued to have no wish to see her.

Robert Dodson's information discovered to Anne that she had indulged a hope, scarcely allowed to herself, till she experienced its disappointment : but here was a convincing proof of his continued indifference, and she saw the folly of her hope. She leant over her drawing, engaged in painful reflections, angry at herself, yet thinking for a moment with repining discontent on her unhappy situation.

It was but a momentary feeling. Anne Grey was once more herself. She would be content and grateful for her lot; happy in the feeling that her duty could no less be performed—her end in life no less fulfilled, though the sun-shine of existence was gone—though the brightness of youth and hope were extinct.

About this period Anne was invited to Hadley. Lady Hadley's affection for her had never diminished, and she was always anxious to secure her society : she had felt the greatest distress at her alarming illness, and could not help fearing that something more than illness had effected the melancholy change she observed with so much sorrow.

On Anne's arrival at Hadley, she found that her old friend, Sir Henry Poynton, was there, and she met him with pleasure. Her fondness for Sir Henry might, perhaps, partly arise from agreeable

associations. She had first met him in company with Edward Temple, and it was in his company that she had last seen him. But there was now more of pain than pleasure in the association, and Sir Henry might reasonably flatter himself that it was for his own sake that Anne smiled so kindly in welcome, as she extended her hand to him on her arrival at Hadley.

“ You are tired, I fear ? ” said Lady Hadley, affectionately, to her, as she observed her paleness.

In truth, Anne was tired and overcome. She had not been at Hadley since the period of her illness, and all the distress which had preceded it, and there were many recollections attached to the place, which rendered it most painful to her to visit it again.

She allowed that she was a little fatigued. Sir Henry looked at her with interest as he said, “ Take care of yourself, Miss Anne ! you cannot take too much care. Let me recommend a little wine made hot, and some sugar, and a little cinnamon in it. It is an excellent thing ! I can assure you it always does me good ! I always take it after a day’s shooting. ”

Anne thanked him, but refused his recommendation.

“ We have not a very large party with us, ” said Lady Hadley, to Anne ; “ but some, whom I think you know : the Denhams, whom I remember you met here some time ago. Caroline Denham is still Caroline Denham, though it seems very doubtful how long she may remain so. You recollect them ? ”

Yes, Anne remembered the Denhams. She remembered well whom she had met at Hadley at the same time. How changed in feeling to what she had then been ! Poor Anne sighed, as Lady Hadley quitted the room, and she seated herself over the fire, and for some moments indulged in a mournful reverie. But she soon roused herself, recalled her thoughts to the present with all its duties and cares ; and, her toilet finished, she descended the stairs looking even more lovely and interesting, in her increased pensiveness, than when she had formerly descended those stairs, happy and glowing with animation and brightness to expect the eager welcome of Edward Temple.

She descended and opened the drawing-room door, and once more she found herself in his presence.

CHAPTER LV.

As Anne found herself thus suddenly and unexpectedly brought into the presence of Edward Temple, it was a strong effort of self-command which saved her. She felt that she *must* subdue her emotion. He was standing near the door; he was not speaking to any one; he was so close to her that she could not help noticing him.

He turned towards her. She tried to speak, but could not, and she felt the colour rushing to her face, and again receding. He seemed likewise confused. There was something certainly unusual in his manner; he did not attempt to shake hands, he merely said—she scarcely knew what, slightly bowed, and then abruptly turned away, whilst Anne remained to recover her composure as best she might.

If any hope had ever lingered in her mind, it was now extinguished. Nothing could be so plainly marked as that whatever interest he had formerly felt in her was entirely at an end. His manner bespoke a complete change of feeling, and a slight degree of confusion at this sudden meeting showed his consciousness that his conduct was open to censure.

Anne exerted herself to overcome her emotion. She entered into conversation with Lord Hadley, and succeeded so well in repressing her feelings, as soon to be able to smile and listen to him with composed attention. She never looked at Mr. Temple again, but she believed he was silent. She did not hear him talking and laughing as usual, or rather making others laugh and talk. He certainly was not gay.

During the evening she studiously avoided being near him, and it appeared that he was no less anxious than herself to avoid all necessity of addressing her.

Anne retired to rest with a mournful feeling of depression. She had seen him; there was no longer a doubt, and how despicable did his character appear! how much ought she to despise herself for ever

having loved him. Alas ! Anne felt, in that moment of utter despondency, that it was not only for having once loved him ; she was conscious of still loving him ! in spite of every assurance of his unworthiness, she still could not regard him with indifference. But she resolved that this weakness should no longer be allowed to exist ; she resolved to think of him in future only as he deserved, and to show by her composure on the morrow how little place he retained in her heart.

We will not too severely scrutinize Anne's behaviour on the following days. We will not try to find fault with her, if every now and then a little emotion was betrayed. Her resolutions were good, but we cannot pretend that she was free from any weakness.

Once she found herself almost alone with Edward Temple. They had both been listening to Miss Denham's singing, when Miss Denham was called away from the instrument by her mother, who detained her some time to teach Lady Hadley a stitch which she herself had forgotten. Anne and Edward Temple were thus left to a tête-à-tête. Anne was confused, she felt as if she could hardly breathe. Edward Temple took up a music book, turned over the leaves, looked at Anne for an instant, but said nothing. However, it seemed as if he thought the silence was awkward, and after a few minutes he spoke. It was the first time that he had directly addressed her since they had been together.

"I am sorry not to see Mr. Grey here," was his remark ; "I hope that he and Mrs. Grey are well?"

This was very common-place from Mr. Temple, and procured a very common-place reply, but that was not so strange.

Anne coldly replied that they were both well.

"I fear,"—Edward Temple began, but he stopped, took up the music book again, and merely said, "I hope you intend singing this evening?"

Anne said she had sung but little lately. He looked at her as she replied, but it was but for an instant. She had recourse to a music book, and both were occupied in turning over the leaves of Miss Denham's songs and waltzes.

Edward Temple seemed to feel the absurdity of their situation. He was evidently annoyed by it.

"What an endless message Lady Denham's must be!" said he.

“Miss Denham has forgotten that we are waiting for another song;” and he half got up to go away, when happily his impatience and Anne’s confusion were dispelled by Miss Denham’s return.

He did not stay, however, to hear more than half her song. He retired to the other end of the room, and Anne observed that for the remainder of the evening he scarcely uttered a word to any one.

Perhaps she might be gratified by this : there was something less galling to her feelings to see him thus silent and apparently out of spirits, than if he had been as gay and entertaining as usual.

If, however, she did find comfort in this, she was doomed to be deprived of it on the morrow. He seemed to resolve on that day to make ample amends for his former dulness and silence by pouring forth all his powers of entertainment.

Never had Edward Temple been more brilliant, more inimitable in his vein of light humour, or in his graver conversational powers. Anne listened, and her heart sunk within her. She reached her room that evening to give vent to the wretchedness of a broken spirit, to the depression of a heart wounded to the quick by the unfeeling gaiety of one who had once pretended to love her, and who had deserted her without a pang !

She had often thought of the *probability* of his gaiety. She had imagined it at times with a sensation of bitterness, but she had always turned from the idea. She wished to believe it impossible, but now she had witnessed it ; now she had been in his presence—forced to endure, with a sinking spirit and broken heart, the sound of his voice—the sight of his gaiety—to see him laughing and happy, careless of her sufferings. Could he remember all that had passed ? could he remember all that he had said ? could he, really, remember that last day ? his assurances that he should never change ? could he remember all this ? No, it must be all forgotten, or he never would have been as he had been this day. He saw that she was suffering, he must see it, for she felt that her wretchedness that evening would not be concealed. It had called forth Lady Hadley’s remarks, Sir Henry Poynton’s,—she had been obliged to plead a head-ache, and to retire early to her room, and there she wept for hours.

All the past had rushed too forcibly on her mind, as she saw him again, to allow her to be calm and careless. *He* might forget—he evidently had forgotten, but *she* could not. He had asked her not

to forget. Oh! in what heartless cruelty had that request been made! He had asked her with eager, fond entreaty not to forget, and she had promised by her look that she would not; she had fulfilled her promise. It was bitterly fulfilled. It was to no purpose she repeated to herself, 'I ought to despise him:' she could not succeed in forgetting that she once had loved him, and she thought with painful agitation of the necessity of spending two more days in his society. A night of reflection restored her self-command.

The two remaining days of her visit at Hadley passed without anything peculiarly agitating, and unmarked by anything, save the continuance of Edward Temple's indifference, and his evident avoidance of all conversation with her. He had only once seemed aware of her presence, and that when Lady Hadley was talking to her one morning.

Lady Hadley had been speaking of the Foleys. She named George Foley as one of whom she had a very high opinion. Anne chanced to look up as Lady Hadley spoke, and she saw that Edward Temple had his eyes fixed on her.

Lady Hadley asked her whether George Foley was now at home, and she blushed deeply as she replied. She was, however, spared from the idea that her confusion was long remarked by him, for in a few minutes he left the room.

"He was, perhaps, observing for the first time the change in my appearance," thought Anne, "since last he saw me. I am somewhat paler, it is true; others could remark it, and be concerned at it, and, perhaps, at last, even he has been struck by it."

However this might be, Edward Temple's indifference was evident, and Anne tried to feel glad in being thus thoroughly convinced of the fact. It was the best cure for any remaining weakness in his favour, as it could not fail to convince her most satisfactorily of his unworthiness. She listened to his agreeableness, his wit, the air of sense, and of good feeling he knew how to throw over his conversation; but she could no longer be deceived by it. Her manner, after the first few days, was cold and distant, as her nature permitted. Gentle and forgiving as she was, she had real firmness and dignity of character; and Edward Temple might have felt that he had fallen in her estimation, and that she was not again to be trifled with.

The visit to Hadley gave George Foley a better chance of success with Anne than he had heretofore possessed. She almost acknowledged the fact, as she drove home, depressed in spirits, unhappy, and forlorn. She began to blame herself for allowing her attachment to Edward Temple to prevent her from fulfilling the wishes of her parents in accepting George Foley. He was thoroughly estimable : she had the highest opinion of his character, and of the steadiness of his attachment : she could find no objection to him, but that which her preference to Edward Temple suggested, and that ! how could she compare the two ? How superior did George Foley now appear to the person she had so blindly loved. The comparison was every way in his favour.

Her judgment told her that it would be wrong any longer to reject his addresses, whilst by their acceptance she might fulfil the ardent wishes of her parents. She returned home determined no longer to meet his advances with coldness, but to endeavour, if possible, to learn to love George Foley.

She remained firm to her resolution during the week that she remained at home. On the next her good resolutions were to be put to the test, for all the party were going to Chatterton.

The day before they went, Mr. Grey was unexpectedly called away by business, which he feared would detain him a day or two. It was arranged he should join them at Chatterton, if able to return.

The day arrived, and they went ; and as if to assist Anne in her endeavours to dislike Edward Temple, and to love George Foley, Edward Temple himself was there.

CHAPTER LVI.

ANNE did not, perhaps, feel in full force the advantage which the presence of Edward Temple might prove to George Foley's claims. However, she was composed in her manner as she met him, and

Charlotte Daventry praised her very warmly for her firmness and dignity.

“ Nothing could be better than your manner,” said she, when they were alone. “ Persevere, my dear, and I shall be proud of you.”

Anne smiled, but it was not a happy smile, though she tried hard to feel so, and to smile as if she were.

“ He met all of you as if he were glad to see you,” observed Anne.

“ Had he any feeling,” said Charlotte, “ he could not have done so !”

“ Very true,” sighed Anne, and she sat down forgetting she had to change her morning attire, till Mrs. Watson reminded her of the hour; and she then started up and dressed so quickly that Mrs. Watson wished she had been a little less hurried.

“ I had not time to smooth that plait. I am afraid Mrs. Foley will not praise the hair to day. I wish I could have just smoothed that plait again,” thought Mrs. Watson, as Anne left the room.

Anne found the party assembled. Edward Temple was in the room. George Foley, whom she had not yet seen, came forward immediately to meet her, and she welcomed him so cordially that he was happy for the remainder of the evening.

Edward Temple just looked at her as she entered and spoke to George Foley, and this was all the attention he bestowed on her during the evening. He talked to Charlotte Daventry a little : and when Anne and she were alone again together at night, she told her how much it had annoyed her to be obliged to talk to him, and how nearly she had betrayed her indignation.

“ You concealed it very well, dearest Charlotte,” said Anne, affectionately, “ and I thanked you for it from my heart. You know how much I wish that your manner, and that of all my family, should not alter towards him, but should be as civil as usual.”

“ I talked and laughed a good deal with him,” continued Charlotte, “ as I would to any mere stranger. He might, perhaps, be aware that my style of conversation did not evince any great friendship for him.”

“ Did he ever mention my name ?” said Anne, after a little pause.

“ Yes, he did, ” said she. “ Once, only once. ”

“ In what way? ” asked Anne, colouring deeply.

“ It will give you no pleasure to hear, ” said Charlotte, kindly, “ and it was merely a trifling remark. ”

“ I wish to hear, ” said Anne. “ The less flattering the better for me. ”

“ Well, perhaps so, ” said Charlotte, as if acquiescing in what Anne said. “ There was not much in it, for it merely regarded personal appearance. We were speaking of the term interesting, and what people meant when they said a person looked interesting. I said that illness often gave that look. He laughed at the idea, and said, ‘ No, a woman should never be ill, if she can help it. An illness always ruins a woman’s looks, ’ and then, as if he almost wished to be impertinent, he added, immediately, ‘ Your cousin has been ill, has she not? ’ Anne, I did not reply. I could not. I turned away. I was too indignant. ”

Anne was silent, her heart was too full to speak. She leant her face upon her hands, and said, at length, in a low, tremulous voice, “ Thank you, Charlotte, you were right to tell me. It was best I should know, and now good-night. I am rather overcome, and I am better alone perhaps : good-night, dearest Charlotte. Remember, ” she added, as Charlotte was quitting the room, “ I wish your manner to continue the same. ” Charlotte nodded assent and quitted her.

The unexpected presence of Edward Temple was a matter of some embarrassment to Mrs. Grey. She felt that Mr. Grey might, perhaps, have thought it as well that Anne should not be thrown again into his society, and might, if he had been there, have made some excuse for quitting the house ; she was, indeed, herself so indignant with him that she very much disliked being in his presence, but still, what was to be done?

She did not know, so she would wait till Mr. Grey arrived, it could only be a day or two, and meantime Mr. Temple was very quiet and civil, and he must see how much she hated him.

The next day Anne’s firmness was put to a severe trial. She was seated in the morning at a table near which were Edward Temple and Miss Ferrars, the young lady whom we have before mentioned, as one whom Anne hoped might distract William’s attention

from Charlotte Daventry. She was very intimately acquainted with Mr. Temple, and there was between them all the familiarity of friends.

Anne had been talking to George Foley during a great part of the morning. He had just left her, and she could not help overhearing the conversation between Miss Ferrars and Edward Temple.

They were talking on an interesting subject, considering those between whom it was discussed. It was on constancy in love, and the comparative claims of each sex to the virtue of constancy. Miss Ferrars, of course, advocated the cause of her own, whilst Edward Temple (and how could he? Anne thought,) warmly defended that of his.

Miss Ferrars treated the subject gaily, and brought many playful, ingenious arguments in favour of her opinion. She was answered with more than equal wit by Edward Temple; but at the time that George Foley left his seat by Anne, he seemed inclined to consider the matter more gravely.

They had both begun in a lively, if not ironical, tone; but by degrees, as it were, unconsciously, he became more serious—he spoke of the strength, the fervour, the steadiness of attachment in men, of the impossibility of change where once the affections were really bestowed—he judged, he said, of what his own feelings would be; he had spoken gravely, but then, seeming to recollect himself, his manner changed, the tone of persiflage was renewed, and he made Miss Ferrars laugh, as he passed an ironical eulogium on the characters of women, those beings who have no characters at all; but again, as he proceeded, he once more became serious. He spoke of the difference between the feelings of men and those of the other sex, the frivolity of their characters—easily persuaded—easily swayed by the love of gaiety and admiration.

He continued, and as he spoke, it was less as if he were addressing Miss Ferrars than thinking aloud. He described such a character as appeared gentle, affectionate, amiable. He described, in short, a character such as Anne Grey's. She, perhaps, was not quite aware that it was so, but still she listened eagerly as he spoke. He gave a beautiful description of a woman's character—he stopped a moment.

“This,” said he, “is what it sometimes appears, and yet it is appearance alone.”

Anne could scarcely breathe with anxiety to hear what he would say farther.

“It is only in appearance that it is so beautiful—only the appearance which makes us love it so warmly. We feel that we might trust to such a character,” he continued: “we feel that, from such a mixture of firmness, gentleness, and sweetness, we might reasonably look for consistency and constancy—that the heart of such a being once touched—once, as we fondly believed our own”—he paused an instant—then added—“From such a being we might reasonably allow ourselves to fear no change: and yet it is not so! we must not trust even to appearances so fair as these. We shall find that constancy, strength of affection, firmness and consistency of character, do not belong to women. We may hope—we may fondly trust—but we shall be deceived.”

His voice and manner had become every instant more earnest, and he was silent for a moment, apparently occupied with his own thoughts; then suddenly recollecting himself—recollecting Miss Ferrars, he turned towards her, and with a gay tone, said, “Well, Miss Ferrars, what have you to say in favour of your sex? Not a word I see, by your doubtful look.”

“I only ask,” said Miss Ferrars, smiling, “whether you speak from experience? Whether you have ever known such a character, and known it fail? You must answer that question before I will say whether I agree with you or not.”

Anne listened: she almost leant forward to listen for Edward Temple’s answer. Her very life seemed to depend on that answer.

“That is scarcely a fair question, Miss Ferrars,” said he, smiling. “However, to convince you, I will answer it. I *do* know such a character.”

Anne felt the colour rush to her face as he said so. It was an overpowering sensation of delight which caused that rush. She had listened to all he said—she could scarcely help applying it. She scarcely felt a doubt that he meant it should be applied; that when he described this character; when he spoke of the disappointment, in finding change and inconsistency in such a character, he spoke of himself and of her. Something in his voice, his manner, his forgetfulness of Miss Ferrars, seemed to carry conviction to her mind. He evidently meant that she should hear what he was saying.

The hope that such a conviction carried to Anne's mind was the most delightful she had ever yet experienced.

How could he have spoken thus, if he himself were cold and fickle? if he were guilty of anything of which the Miss Bingleys had accused him? It could not be. Anne abandoned herself to the delightful persuasion that she had been mistaken in believing his unworthiness—in believing him indifferent to her. It was plain his absence, his carelessness of manner, had been caused by his belief in her inconstancy. She could not restrain the feelings of joy to which such an idea gave rise. She moved quietly from her seat, and quitted the room, to indulge in her own chamber in all the happiness which overflowed her heart.

Before she again quitted the room, Charlotte entered. Anne's animated countenance as she approached showed that something pleasant had occurred, and she was soon relating to her all that had passed—all her joy—her hope—all the various emotions which were agitating her breast!

Charlotte seated herself at a table as she spoke, and as she leaned her head on her hands, her countenance was concealed from observation.

Anne finished all she had to say, and turned her beaming face towards her cousin, anxious to know whether she encouraged her hope—whether she thought it well-grounded.

As she ceased to speak, Charlotte suddenly raised her head, darted a look of horror at her, started from her seat, uttered a piercing scream, and the next moment fell senseless on the ground.

Anne's presence of mind almost forsook her, but she exerted it to the utmost. She rang the bell for assistance, and applied the only remedies in her power. Before long they proved successful; Charlotte heaved a deep sigh, unclosed her eyes, and lay a moment still: then, roused by the sound of Anne's voice, she stretched out her arms, and again relapsed into stupor.

Once more she was recovered, and this time she appeared to have regained her self-command. She looked pale, but she soon smiled and spoke cheerfully to Anne—said it was nothing—that it had been a sudden violent pain, which had caused her fainting: but, would not hear of having medical assistance, or even consent to have her illness named to any one. She begged the maid not to

mention it to Mrs. Grey, and at last seemed so perfectly recovered that Anne became satisfied, and had time once more to think of Edward Temple—and happiness.

But before she quitted the room, Charlotte Daventry had inspired her with a doubt whether she might call that happiness. She held her hand for a moment in hers, and affectionately pressed it, whilst the maid was occupied in another part of the room, saying, in a low voice : “ Do not trust too much. I had not time to speak when I wished, because of my provoking illness. But do not trust too much, Anne. You may be deceived—you know that he can deceive. *Hope*, but do not *trust*. We may hope that he is not artful, but we do not know ; ” and again she said impressively and anxiously as the maid was returning towards them, “ Do not trust.”

As Anne left the room and once more descended the stairs. it was with altered feelings. Hope was gone—hope and happiness ! for he had deceived once, and why should he not deceive again ?

Edward Temple was still in the room when she returned, but he was no longer talking to Miss Ferrars. He was reading, and he looked up as she opened the door.

“ Yes,” thought she, (and perhaps her face at the moment expressed her indignation,) “ he wishes to observe whether his artifice has been successful ! ”

Perhaps he remarked her look, for he immediately averted his eyes.

Anne exerted herself to talk. She listened to an excellent story of Mr. Foley’s, about his friend the Duke of——, with great apparent interest ; and then was able to enter into a lively conversation with Sir Henry Woodthorpe, a young man who was staying in the house ; and she felt, though very miserable, well satisfied with her own conduct, except in one particular. George Foley had seated himself at her side, and had tried to engage her in conversation ; but she could not at that moment admit of his attentions. She feared she had at first half pettishly replied to his remarks, and had at last decidedly turned away to speak to Sir Henry Woodthorpe, who was on the other side.

George Foley had evidently been hurt by her manner. He had got up, remained for some time looking out of the window in apparent melancholy abstraction, and then had quitted the room as she

continued talking to Sir Henry, with all the appearance of gaiety she could assume.

But for this, Anne would at least have been well satisfied with her own conduct; but now, she was not only miserable at the disappointment of a momentary feeling of hope, but mortified that she had caused real pain to one whom she esteemed and regarded so sincerely as George Foley.

CHAPTER LVII.

THE first part of the evening was unmarked by any difference in Edward Temple's manner, and he seemed scarcely aware of the presence of Anne.

This at the moment was a comfort to her. It told her that her hope of the morning was not without foundation, for why, if he had wished to deceive her into a belief of his caring for her, and of having been wounded by a supposed change in her sentiments, did he not continue that deceit by now feigning some show of interest? It was too painful not to hope, and she would not despair, though warned of her danger by the friendly voice of Charlotte Daventry.

That evening Anne and Miss Foley were sitting at a round table, looking over some drawings. There were various portfolios, and albums, and also some of Miss Foley's sketches. Sir Henry Woodthorpe was seated beside Anne. Edward Temple joined the party; but he was on the other side of Miss Foley, and Anne had no occasion to join in conversation with him. He talked to Miss Foley, and Anne could give her attention more exclusively to Sir Henry Woodthorpe, whilst they all continued looking at the drawings.

"It is pleasant to look over old sketches," said Isabella, to Mr. Temple. "It recalls so much that is agreeable—so many of the friends with whom one has witnessed the scenes before one."

Anne and Sir Henry had just then come to a pause in their conversation.

“ I cannot think that there is much pleasure to be gained by the recollection,” was Mr. Temple’s reply, “ I do not feel that I can look back with anything but regret on the remembrance of the last few years. If those we love, and those in whom we have felt an interest, were never changed by time, it might indeed be delightful to remind ourselves of past times; but you are to be envied, Miss Foley, if you can look back with pleasure.”

He stopped. Anne looked up as he finished speaking. She saw his eyes were fixed on her face. Even Anne Grey was indignant. The effrontery of such language! The evident wish to deceive her! She saw that he meant that she should apply it. She could not be silent, and she spoke in a manner which called for attention.

“ It is not uncommon,” said she, “ for those who are apt themselves to change, to complain of change in others.” She stopped, too much agitated to proceed. She had spoken in a low voice, and it had been an effort to her to speak; but, though her voice had been low, it had been firm and distinct. Edward Temple must have heard, for Miss Foley had been silent meantime. He probably felt the reproof. He certainly changed colour, and he leant over the sketch-book he held in his hand; but Anne was too much agitated herself to be able to observe the effect her words had produced. She was only aware that he continued silent, and that there was an awkward pause for a few seconds, which was broken by a timely remark of Miss Foley’s.

Sir Henry Woodthorpe then found something to say to Anne, but she was not much inclined to attend to his agreeableness, and soon got up to join the party at the piano-forte.

She was asked to sing, and, much against her inclinations, she was forced to comply. She had been so much agitated by what had passed, that she felt almost unequal to the command of her voice.

She had sung but little since her illness, and very little since she had strove to think ill of Edward Temple. There was an association in her mind with regard to music which made it generally painful. How much more so now, when she had just been suffering from a proof of his ungenerous conduct! But she successfully endeavoured to be composed, though her choice, or rather Mr. Foley’s and Mrs. Grey’s choice of a song for her, was unfortunate. It was one of those she had often sung in former happy times at Mr. Temple’s re-

quest. It had been a favourite of his, one exactly suited to her sweet plaintive voice. She sang it that evening with more than her usual expression. It seemed suited to her state of feeling, and she sung as if it were so.

All were struck with it. There was something in her look, in the tones of her voice, which touched and affected many.

Edward Temple seemed to feel it; for he was leaning as if unconscious of the presence of all around, with his face half covered by his hands. His countenance was concealed, but he was evidently buried in thought, and that of no light or pleasurable kind.

Anne's song was at an end. She had hardly been aware that it had excited attention. She had forgotten her habitual shyness—forgotten everything in the absorbing feeling of unhappiness created by one subject. She had been almost relieved by singing. The air and words that were chosen for her had suited her feelings, and had been only the natural expression of her melancholy thoughts. She became confused as she concluded. She got up, left the instrument, and seated herself apart by a table on which books and drawings were scattered.

In a few minutes Edward Temple was near her. Anne felt the blood rush to her face as she found that he had seated himself at her side; but she did not lose her self-command. The music continued. Miss Ferrars was singing, and there was occupation in listening to that.

Edward Temple addressed her, but he was evidently agitated. His voice, his manner betrayed it.

“You have often sung that song before, Miss Grey,” said he.

Anne made no answer. She could not if she had wished it; but she determined to be guarded.

“He wishes to deceive,” thought she. “I will not be deceived. I will not be made less miserable one moment, only to be made more wretched the next.”

Edward Temple continued, in a voice which betrayed the struggle to be calm: “You may suppose, though I know you will not acknowledge it, that it must be painful to me to hear it again. You say that those who are apt to change are most ready to accuse others of doing so. I know therefore to what accusation I lay myself open were I to speak of the pain caused by the conviction of change

in others. You will not believe me," he added, with increasing agitation, "if I speak of the painful feelings that song has called forth. You cannot enter into them. It is the person who does not change," he added, in a lower voice, and looking at Anne, "and not the one who has changed, who is the sufferer."

Anne could hardly control her emotion sufficiently to reply, but she made an effort, and said, in a low voice, not looking up as she did so, "There are changes which do not proceed from fickleness. We may sometimes form wrong judgments, and then it is our duty to change. It is painful to be obliged to do so, where we have once loved,"—she corrected herself—"once esteemed—it is painful to find ourselves called upon to alter our opinion—to feel that it is our duty—"

She became painfully confused. Her emotion would not allow her to proceed. There was a moment's pause.

Edward Temple was scarcely less agitated; but he was about to reply, when Mr. Foley approached. The conversation stopped, and Anne was scarcely sorry to escape from one of so embarrassing a nature.

She was yet in doubt what to think or what to feel. She dared not hope, and yet her heart was in a flutter of joy. One moment she felt inclined to believe implicitly all that his manner implied. The next she remembered those words of Charlotte Daventry, "He knows how to deceive—do not trust him."

George Foley watched her with painful interest—watched her as she conversed with Edward Temple. He sighed. "She is lost to me!" he said to himself. "But why should I regret if she can be happy?"

From that moment his manner towards Anne was changed. He scarcely ever allowed himself to be near her, or to talk to her. He was silent, and out of spirits. He showed neither pique nor ill-humour towards her. He merely showed that he withdrew his claims—that he relinquished the hope which was no less dear to him because it had been fruitless.

George Foley's conduct was generous and disinterested. Anne understood it, and she wished it had been possible for her to have made him aware how much she was touched by it—how much she esteemed him for it, and how much she thanked him in her heart

for the delicacy he had evinced. But without encouraging him again in false hopes she could not do so, and by her increased affection for Isabella alone, could she give any proofs of her gratitude.

The next day most of the party at Chatterton had gone out either walking or driving, whilst Anne remained at home.

Amongst the driving party were Charlotte Daventry, Miss Ferrars, and George Foley. Edward Temple and Mr. Foley were walking. Mrs. Grey and Mrs. Foley retired successively from the drawing-room, and left Anne alone. She sat down to the instrument, and was engaged in playing when the door opened and Edward Temple walked in.

This was more than Anne either expected, or quite desired at that moment. She wished that he should have an opportunity of speaking and of finishing the conversation which had been interrupted by Mr. Foley on the preceding evening; and yet she felt, as the opportunity seemed to present itself, that it was too agitating to be desirable.

Anne ceased playing, and rose from the instrument as he entered.

“I am afraid I have interrupted you,” observed Mr. Temple.

He looked confused, as though he felt the awkwardness of the tête-à-tête. Anne seated herself at her work: he placed himself near her. Each seemed to be struggling for composure, and Anne felt more lenient as she observed his agitation.

“It is very long since we have met in this house,” said he, “and perhaps so long that I have no right to look upon myself any longer as more than a mere acquaintance; but still as a friend”—he hesitated—“as one who has the feelings of a friend towards you, perhaps I may be allowed to offer my congratulations on what I hope,” he said, half inaudibly, “may prove for your happiness.”

Anne looked up. She forgot her confusion in surprise. She looked at him a moment, and a delightful thought flashed across her mind. He saw her surprise.

“I fear I have been indiscreet. You do not admit my claim to speak of what is not yet publicly acknowledged. There *was* a time when it would have been different,” he added, in a low, tremulous voice; but he checked himself. “I have not even the

claim of friendship," he continued, after a slight pause, "to excuse my intrusion. I must ask your pardon."

Anne was not sure of his meaning. "I am not aware to what you allude," said she. "I do not understand you."

"That is," said Edward Temple, looking at her, "you think it right not to understand me. I am sorry," he continued, in a slight tone of pique, "that I said anything on the subject; but as I have ventured thus far, I may as well explain. I hoped that my congratulations on your approaching union with Mr. George Foley might have been received from one, who had once the honour of your friendship."

Anne looked up, in a moment of astonishment, and then as quickly averted her eyes. "You are mistaken," said she. "There is no engagement between Mr. Foley and myself. There never has been any."

Edward Temple started as she spoke.

"No engagement!"—and his tone was not one of disappointment. It was fully as happy as Anne could have wished, but scarcely hoped it would have been.

He looked at her as he spoke, with such enthusiastic delight that she was obliged to hang over her work to conceal her blushes and her happiness. His tone, his manner could not be misinterpreted, and he left her no longer the possibility of mistaking his object. He soon spoke in a way which left no doubt of his meaning, and Anne was before long satisfactorily convinced that she had been guilty of an error. She had expended very unnecessarily a great deal of praise-worthy indignation. Her indignation had been very good in itself, but it had been expended on the wrong person.

We may easily suppose that reserve and disguise once thrown aside, Anne Grey and Edward Temple had much to say to one another—much to explain, which, though very uninteresting to any other person, must certainly have been most interesting to themselves, for they were still seated at that awkward tête-à-tête, which Anne had so much dreaded, when the party returned unusually late from their drive. The door was opened by George Foley, and Anne blushed so deeply, and said something so unintelligible about a pleasant drive, and being late, as she walked past him, that he stood a moment in astonishment; then shut the door rather hastily;

and at dinner that day he scarcely spoke a word, and told Mrs. Grey in the evening that he meant to leave home the next day.

CHAPTER LVIII.

MR. GREY arrived at Chatterton that evening. It may be imagined that he was far from feeling satisfaction, as he beheld Edward Temple. He anxiously looked at Anne, and he could not tell how to understand the appearance of happiness which he saw sparkling in her eyes : still less was he inclined to rejoice at it, for he felt with bitterness that she might be a second time the victim of deceit.

However, a few words from her as she drew him aside, seemed to remove his unpleasant feelings. The smile that was visible on her face was repeated on his own, mingled with a look of still deeper happiness, as he for a moment pressed her hand and implanted a kiss on her cheek.

The few minutes of conversation which the presence of others alone permitted, seemed to have been sufficient. Mr. Grey the next instant was speaking to Edward Temple.

“ My dear Miss Grey, ” said Mrs. Foley, affectionately, to Anne ; “ I am glad to see you look well again. I really have been quite unhappy about you, and so I told Isabella ; and we both have been agreeing that you could not be well. But you look quite yourself again this evening. ”

Edward Temple stood near. Anne’s eye glanced for a moment towards him. How impertinent in him to smile ! what heartless cruelty ! yet Anne Grey smiled too, but she blushed so deeply that it showed how much she was hurt by his cruelty.

“ There is Isabella coming for you to sing, I see, ” said Mrs. Foley ; and Isabella approached, and Anne followed her to the instrument, sat down, and sung such a lively French song, with such a lively heart-felt gaiety, and *naïve* expression of merriment, that all were infected with her gaiety. Every one encored, and Anne

sung again ; and Edward Temple was standing over her as she sung, smiling with her, and with the others ; and watching her face with delighted attention.

Anne looked at him sometimes with a pretty beginning of a smile, and then turned away a little embarrassed—probably distressed by his effrontery, and as she left the room with the other ladies, he even ventured to shake hands with her.

The whole procession of ladies at length retired to their rooms, and when they were all safely lodged in them, Anne Grey was seen passing across the passage to that of Charlotte Daventry, who had retired rather earlier than the rest. She knocked at the door, entered, and closed it after her, and what was the sight which struck her on her entrance !

Charlotte Daventry sat pale and motionless ; her eyes fixed on the ground : as Anne entered, she uttered a violent scream.

“ Leave me, I tell you—leave me,” she began, with frantic violence ; “ I bid you leave me. What ! must you come here to taunt me with your happiness ? Do you think I do not see it—do not feel it ? Look here, Anne Grey ”—and she laid hold of her arm, and grasped it with rude violence, “ Look here, Anne Grey. You believe I love you. You believe it faithfully, implicitly ! ” She smiled a moment, and then the smile was gone, and revenge and hatred were stamped upon her countenance. “ Know then, that I love you so well, that I would give this arm,—I would myself hold it to be burnt to the bone—could I by that ensure misery to you—could my curse tell on you—could it wither your heart, and blacken your happiness ! Aye ! I love you so well, so tenderly as this ! I hate you—I have ever hated you with a hate you know not of. Know that to me you owe your tears, your misery, your all but death. I saw you weep, and sob, and languish, and writhe !—I did it ! Yes, Anne Grey ! believe it if you will ! You *shall* believe it ! I did it ! He !—why he was never false to you !—*he* never deceived any poor fond girl. Jane Bingley never spoke as I said. He always loved you !—Yes, start—turn pale. It was my work—it was only mine ! It was all false—but you believed, and I was happy ! ” She smiled in ghastly triumph. “ I tell you I loved him—I—Charlotte Daventry loved him : but she hates him now—she hates you both with a deadly, bitter hate ! ”

Her voice sank lower and lower, till it became almost inarticulate with the intensity of the feeling it strove to express.

Anne had sunk half-lifeless on a chair as she spoke ; but still she did not faint—she heard every word. She remained perfectly still ; looking in terrified astonishment on Charlotte, half stupified with what she heard. But when Charlotte ceased, it recalled her to a sense of her situation. She felt all but fainting ; but she made a violent effort—reached the door—closed it—ran along the passage—gained her own room, and then sunk senseless on the floor.

When she came to herself, and to a recollection of what had passed, her first thought was to call her father, and take him to Charlotte's room before help might be too late. Charlotte's insanity was too evident : she had long suspected—it was now certain. The horror of feeling that by her fainting she had lost time which might have been fatal, almost overcame her again ; but she exerted herself—reached her father's room, and in a scarce articulate voice told him to go to Charlotte instantly. As he lingered for an instant to ask for some explanation, she half pushed him from the door, telling him “ for God's sake to make haste ! ” She tried to follow him, but her powers forsook her, and as he left the room, and she felt that the immediate necessity for exertion was over, she again fainted.

On recovering her senses, she found herself lying on the bed in Mrs. Grey's room ; Mrs. Grey in violent hysterics, and Mr. Grey standing pale as death, seeming almost unconscious of what was passing around him. Anne started up, forgetting all, in her dreadful anxiety to hear the truth. She sprang from the bed, laid her hand on her father's arm, as she looked eagerly in his face. “ Tell me,” said she, “ what is it ? ”

Mr. Grey shuddered, and in a low voice, as he pressed Anne's arm, he murmured, “ You have saved her.”

“ Thank God ! ” was Anne's exclamation, as she burst into tears.

Mr. Grey had reached Charlotte Daventry's room, and with a feeling of the most dreadful alarm, he gently tried the door as though he dreaded the sight it might reveal. The door was not locked ; for a moment he stood gazing on the scene which presented itself before him. In the farther recess of the large room was Charlotte Daventry, kneeling—her hands clasped together, her eyes wildly fixed, and glaring with unnatural brilliancy ; her long hair

unloosed, fell down her shoulders; a bright flush was on her cheek. She knelt, and did she pray? She was too much absorbed to hear the entrance of Mr. Grey; he paused for an instant.

“She prays,” he said, and her lips indeed were uttering words. They fell softly—half inaudibly. She spoke, but it was not in prayer. “Father, you see me! Father, you are by me! I see you! I know that you smile! I come—I have failed—I die! Now, father, look on me! You do! you smile!” Her voice was raised. She half shouted again those words, “You smile!” she raised herself from her knees; she started up, her whole frame seemed imbued with energy; she put forth her hand to the table which stood near her—a phial was there. Another moment, and the deed had been done. But she was arrested: Mr. Grey sprang forward—her hand was seized—the bottle gained, and dashed on the ground.

She turned round. Her eyes glared with frenzy. For a moment she stood fixed in a deep, earnest, wondering gaze on the countenance of her uncle. It seemed as if she vainly endeavoured to understand by what means she had been foiled, as if her energies had been exerted for death, and reason could not say why, at that moment, she was not dead. For a few seconds she gazed, (oh! the horror of those seconds!) and then wresting her arm from her uncle’s hold, she burst into a loud, and violent laugh.

But why dwell on scenes like this? That night Charlotte Daventry was conveyed from the house, and as the chaise wheeled along, and she sat forcibly held by the two attendants, who had been immediately sent for, her screams, her laughter, and wild exclamations, might have been heard even rising above the rattling noise of the carriage.

It is useless to speak of the horror, the distress, and confusion which reigned at Chatterton on that fearful night, or to dwell on all that necessarily ensued.

On looking over the papers belonging to the unhappy Charlotte Daventry, Mr. Grey found a letter addressed to himself, which had, apparently, been written but a few hours previous to the attempted suicide. I transcribe parts of it, less incoherent than the rest, which seemed to be merely the ravings of insanity. It appeared to have been written with the consciousness in her mind of wavering reason, a consciousness she anxiously strove to repel, and to hide

from others. In parts, indeed it was so clear and collected that, had it not been for such little touches as betrayed a heated and bewildered imagination, few could trace in it the evidences of insanity.

The passages I transcribe are as follow :—

“ Some years ago, Mr. Grey, you took me home to your
“ family a poor, weeping, orphan girl. You thought you were
“ performing a kind, a praiseworthy action. You were right,
“ for you gave the being who had *sworn* to hate you the opportu-
“ nity she wished—the opportunity to do you harm! If that de-
“ pendant, *grateful* orphan girl had not failed in her plans, you
“ had been rewarded, but it had been in a way more agreeable to
“ me than to you! But I failed! and yet—I have succeeded—
“ succeeded in part! Yes! let me think with pride how much
“ I have done, and let me atone by the step I am about to take that
“ it has not been more! Mr. Grey, when first we met, and when
“ with horror, which, even through years of smiles and grateful
“ looks, you may perhaps remember, I first saw you—the man
“ to whose care and affection I had been intrusted, a father’s
“ dying words had bid me hate you—bitterly hate you—from life
“ to death—through kindness and benefits;—to hate, and to make
“ that hatred tell in working evil, ruin, unhappiness, to you and
“ yours! Yes! when you first beheld me I had deeply sworn to
“ let the energies of a life, of youth, that season of innocence and
“ careless joy—to let all these be devoted to the toil of hate—shud-
“ der as you read—even I can shudder as I write!—I had sworn
“ to forget all joy, all love, all pity, all remorse, to work that deadly
“ work, to plant woe and strife where happiness and peace had
“ dwelt! *It was a blissful task!* I smiled as I looked on that
“ calm, holy peace. I saw it, and I smiled! And there was one
“ whom I then saw : I had never believed before that on earth such
“ a being could exist! gentle, affectionate—gifted in mind and per-
“ son! I saw with ecstasy. *She was mine!* She should love—
“ trust—pity. Easily bruised—easily bowed down—on her my
“ toils should be expended! Yes! Anne Grey, I have seen you
“ weep—I have *made* you weep. I have lain my hand with chil-
“ ling bitterness upon that heart. I have seen you on the point of

“ death—your pale face—your cheerless eye! It was my work.
 “ Oh! it was a noble work! and my father stood by, and he smiled
 “ on me, and I felt that smile within my heart! I felt it, and was
 “ not mad. I am not mad! or I—I too should have wept—I—I
 “ should have grieved—but no, I am not mad!

* * * * *

“ I wound myself silently, carefully, into the heart of that pure
 “ being. I wound and wound, till every sweet affection of that
 “ heart was fastly bound beneath my grasp. She loved. I saw it.
 “ Here was my task, a glorious task! She loved, and Charlotte
 “ Daventry loved, and both loved the same object : but one was
 “ loved again—and the other was suspected and despised! Every
 “ nerve was strained! Yes, I wrote a letter framed to cut deep
 “ into her heart. Long had that letter been written, ere she re-
 “ ceived it, and how did my bosom throb with impatience to fly
 “ and see its effect! I came—I beheld that effect. It was a bliss-
 “ ful sight! The lover too : him had I deceived! I whispered in
 “ his ear, George Foley’s name. I whispered that Anne Grey
 “ was easily persuaded—soon touched! He listened and believed.

* * * * *

“ Know that every trouble that has befallen you or your house
 “ in the few years I have dwelt with you, were either framed, or
 “ fostered, or increased by me. Ever about your house, ever close
 “ to me was he—my father! His cold pale form, his still, sepulchral
 “ voice! ever urging me on : *you* could not see and know ; but I!
 “ he was always there! his voice—his eyes were ever with me : in
 “ the darkness or the light alike—and his laugh! he laughed and
 “ I—I too! Every thought and action has been made subservient
 “ to his will. At this moment there are three devoted fools all
 “ bound to me, as they fondly believe, by the tie of mutual affec-
 “ tion : each, ignorant, confiding, and deceived! These three are
 “ Frank Crawford, Robert Dodson, and (start if you will) your
 “ son—your own son, William!

* * * * *

“ But it is of no avail now to tell you all my schemes. I had
 “ one! a noble plan! one which would have endangered your for-
 “ tune—perhaps your character. Two skilful, but not honest,
 “ attornies would soon have been at work. But fate interposed.

“ You remember the death of that maid-servant—that French girl,
 “ over whose loss I mourned with such affecting tenderness? I
 “ did grieve over her loss. She was a useful tool : she could tam-
 “ per with these men of law ; but I lost my tool : *I* grieved, and
 “ *you* were saved. Once more I proudly raise my head : let me
 “ look proudly on my work ! and whilst the serpent gnaws my
 “ heart for deeds undone, let me still smile and laugh for deeds that
 “ have been done. I have failed in part ; but what have not I, a
 “ poor unassisted girl, accomplished ? I sacrificed all to this grand
 “ object. I sacrificed—you know not how much ! All the pride, the
 “ feelings of a woman. To you I was the poor uneducated girl.
 “ It served my purpose so to appear. You did not know that
 “ I was endowed with those things which captivate and charm.
 “ I was in fact rich in attainment, and gifted by nature with power
 “ in music, in drawing, in painting and poetry—practised in all—
 “ delighting in all : yet all I concealed and renounced to further
 “ my one grand aim——revenge !”

* * * * *

It is needless to dwell on the feelings of Mr. Grey, as he read the letter, of which the detached parts are here given. It presented him with a fearful picture of guilt, of misery and of madness. What vigour of mind—what extraordinary resolution had been exerted in a work which human nature shuddered to contemplate ! It appeared that the dreadful task which had been imposed upon her by the dying commands of her father, had worked gradually but surely on her frame, till reason had sunk. Insanity had been the effect of guilt working on the mind. The energies of a powerful, violent, and ungoverned character, had been devoted to a task fearful and appalling in its nature, and insanity alone could follow the energetic devotion to such a task. What talents misapplied—what powers turned to evil—what a mind overthrown !

And this had been a father's work ! Had he witnessed the event of that day, well might he have groaned under the punishment which his fearful passions brought upon the only being whom he ever loved ! he had called for revenge, and vengeance had been turned upon himself. The child had fallen a victim to the father's guilt.

A fortnight had elapsed when we find Mr. Grey again in the pre-

sence of Charlotte Daventry. He had been sent for to attend, as it was believed, her dying bed ; and who that had seen the wretched lunatic could do otherwise than wish that death should remove her from such a state of hopeless misery !

When Mr. Grey reached the house, he was told by her attendants that the sufferer had become more calm—that the frenzy had ceased, and left her in a state of stupor. Her case was pronounced hopeless, and it could not but be the prayer of all who knew her that she might speedily be released in death.

Mr. Grey was shown into her room. The unhappy being lay on the bed, motionless, and apparently unconscious. As Mr. Grey entered and looked on her—*her* whom he had seen but a few short weeks ago, gay, blooming, and seemingly happy ; now worn almost to a skeleton with the violence of passion, one bright, hectic flush alone tinging the deadly paleness of her face ; his emotion could not be controlled. He forgot all the injury she had wrought—all the hatred she had sworn against him. He knelt by the bed—he hung over her, and fervently uttering a prayer to God for the soul of the maniac, he wept long and uncontrollably by the side of his unhappy niece. He prayed for her forgiveness—he prayed—and was indeed his prayer heard, and granted ?

Charlotte lay for awhile motionless. Her uncle's tears fell on her thin attenuated hand, that seemed scarcely like that of a living being. The physician entered the room. " She cannot linger long," were his words, as he looked at her, and Mr. Grey felt, that none could think, that wasted form could indeed long remain on earth.

The bright beam of the morning sun, which at that moment streamed in through the window, fell on the death-like form of Charlotte Daventry ! She moved : she stretched out her hands : she unclosed her eyes.

" Forgive—forgive—Anne Grey," was softly murmured.

So gently had those words been spoken, that the ear could scarcely catch their tones. She raised her hand, and put it to her forehead, as if trying to recollect ; and for a moment her eye fell on her uncle. She saw his tears—his look of kindness. A sudden emotion seemed to seize her ; to the amazement of all around, she started up, she threw forward her arms—placed them round his neck,

and in gentle, half audible accents, murmured “Forgive—pray for me—” and then again sunk back.

They looked—they waited—they watched; and whilst her uncle’s tears fell fast, he looked with breathless eagerness again to catch some proof of penitence. He looked in vain. No movement was made. All was still—the physician laid his hand gently on Mr. Grey’s arm. Charlotte Daventry was dead.

CHAPTER LIX.

BUT we will leave the contemplation of sorrow, and pass on to a calmer and happier period. Horror, pity, and grief had in turn held their sway; but they were now passing by, and the memory of Charlotte Daventry was ceasing to cast its sadness on the minds of those who had known and loved her. Edward Temple is established as the privileged guest at Weston, the acknowledged lover of Anne Grey; and though we perceive that, with his usual deceit, he is trying to convince her that, however delightful he is as a lover, he will be still more so as a husband, yet what else can be expected from such a character? And if we find Anne Grey easily trusting and deceived again, what less can we expect from one so affectionate and confiding?

We must leave her to her fate; and may it be a happy one! and if trust can be placed in that bright smile, in those soft tones, in those gentle eyes—but once more am I beginning, when I had almost escaped all danger of romance? It must not be! I will persevere to the end in the matter of fact style of my common-place story.

“How was it possible that you could have believed in my inconstancy?” said Edward Temple, one day to Anne, as they sat talking together at Weston.

“I must answer that question by another,” said she, smiling. “How was it possible you could have believed in mine?”

“Confessions are not disagreeable with such a confessor,” said he, as he looked at her. “But before I begin will you not promise me absolution for my sins?”

“Yes, willingly,” said she, smiling.

“You do not know how many I have to confess, or perhaps you would not so readily promise,” said he. “But, to my task; and first I broke a promise made to myself; which was, never to fall in love.”

“That was a foolish promise,” said Anne.

“You will forgive it then?” said he: “indeed you ought,” he continued, “for I have a perfect excuse now before me, for even a greater breach of promise. But to my faults again—I fell in love in defiance of my promise: but, no man on earth could have helped that, you must allow? Fault the second—having in the pride of my heart made such a promise—but then I had never seen you!”

But we will give the purport only of his confession, for it would be endless to repeat the whole conversation. It must be confessed that Edward Temple had some faults. He had had too much reliance on his own firmness and discernment; for his study of character was not always successful. It is in fact often both dangerous and deceitful.

When he came to Weston, before his departure for Paris, he had determined not to propose to Anne. He wished to put her to the test of absence. He had studied her character, and he thought that if a fault was there to be found, it was in being too easily led by the opinion of others—that the amiable and depending nature of her disposition might render her too weak and yielding: he thought that perhaps she was capable of attaching herself easily, and of easily changing from one attachment to another. He believed that she loved him; but he fancied himself not sufficiently certain that under circumstances equally favourable, she might not love another. He came to Weston, and he nearly forgot his intended prudence: but Robert Dodson and Sir Henry Poynton saved him, against his wishes at the moment, and he left Anne free from any decided engagement.

Before he quitted Paris, he heard that she had accepted George Foley. For a time he did not believe it, and he reached England still determined to see her, and to declare his feelings towards her

without reserve. But in England the report was repeated, and it seemed to come from good authority. Charlotte Daventry had taken care that it should. His preconceived doubts of Anne, and his knowledge that George Foley had long loved her, gave additional force to the report. In short, so many facts concurred to attest its truth, that at length he could no longer doubt. He formed the resolution of never marrying, and never believing any woman constant; and went into the world to be gay and careless, and as he believed, to forget Anne Grey.

But after a time his desire to see her again so strongly revived, that he accepted an invitation to Chatterton. Meantime he met Charlotte Daventry at the Bingleys', and she left him no longer in doubt as to the fact of Anne's engagement to another. He determined more firmly than ever to believe all women weak and fickle, and to think every man a fool for marrying. He heard of Anne's illness, and he suffered—we need not say how much!—but still, it was for George Foley that she was to be restored. He would not see her: he would never again approach her.

Some accidental circumstance however inspired a doubt of George Foley's good fortune, and he went to Hadley. There he met Anne, and at first, he wavered in his opinion—but then he saw her blush as George Foley's name was mentioned. Still he accepted an invitation to Chatterton, and there—we know what followed. He proposed and was accepted, and it only remained for him to repent of his former folly, and to resolve in future never to trust presumptuously to his own firmness of purpose and insight into character.

My task is nearly over. Anne Grey will soon be no more, but, Anne Temple, may you be happy—as happy as you deserve! and can we give you a better or a kinder wish?

We quit our heroine, to say a few words of the other characters in our story. Of Lord and Lady Stoketon, we have little to add, but that the favourable effect produced on Sophy's mind by the alarming illness of her child, was never effaced by after years of happiness, and she remained firm to the character which she then determined to become—a good wife.

The shock of Charlotte Daventry's death had been severe to William Grey, who was absent from home at the time. He had been engaged to her, but had been persuaded by her to conceal the engagement,

both on the plea of its displeasing his parents, and her doubts of the strength of her own sentiments upon so short a trial. Some years spent in travelling on the continent succeeded in diverting his feelings from the melancholy subject which too long entirely engrossed them. He returned home a sadder, but a wiser man, and before long Isabella Foley's unshaken attachment was rewarded by becoming his wife; and if she had some little oddities of temper to bear with, her own sweetness of disposition made her fully equal to the task.

George Foley strove to forget his own regrets, in the contemplation of the happiness of the woman he loved, and though it was some time before he could recover the pang which her marriage had caused him, he had so much firmness of character and good sense that he at length succeeded.

Of Frank Crawford we must say a few words. On the very day of Charlotte Daventry's attempted suicide, he received a letter addressed to himself in her hand-writing. He was sitting alone with his father at Gleddon, when it was put into his hands. He opened it—read a few words, then rushed out of the room, and, for many succeeding days, Frank Crawford was lying in a fearful state of fever and delirium. His life was for a time despaired of: but he recovered, and when he rose from his bed of sickness, it was as a different person. He was totally changed in disposition and mind, and when, on the death of his father, a few years afterwards, he returned from the continent, he was only known to the world as the eccentric and recluse Lord Gleddon; and at the age of forty-seven, the dwellers in that same world were again reminded that Frank Crawford had once been known amongst them by seeing in the papers the announcement of his decease.

Henry Grey, the warm-hearted, frank, intelligent boy, grew up into the warm-hearted, frank, intelligent man. A fortune was unexpectedly left to him by a distant relation, and having found a husband for his sister Anne, whom even he allowed to be worthy of her, he now sought a partner for himself, and again was successful in his search; for Lady Emily Grey was all that could be desired to satisfy the affectionate wishes of Anne, in the wife of her brother Henry.

A few words of Lady Hadley will close the book. It will easily be believed that Edward Temple was not a less frequent and welcome visitor at Hadley, as a married, than he had been as an un-

married, man; and that Lady Hadley now looked with heartfelt pleasure on the conversion of the once melancholy house at Temple-court, into the prized and happy home of her whom she had so fondly loved as Anne Grey.

THE END.

1847
The first of the year 1847 was a very dry one, and the crops were much injured. The weather was very hot, and the crops were much injured. The weather was very hot, and the crops were much injured. The weather was very hot, and the crops were much injured.

THE END

Grove, Harriet

Anne Grey a novel

Brussels 1835

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